Returning to the Workforce

A GUIDE TO THE JOB SEARCH TOOLKIT

FULL GUIDE AVAILABLE FREE AT FIRSTFIND.ORG



Where to now?

Create skills and experience inventories to identify target jobs. Use a mind map format and resources you will find in Chapter 1. You may also like the Clifton Strengths Assessment; gallupstrengthcenter.com. Chapter 2

Check your social media

Make your online image workready. Pictures of your children, the successful school fundraiser and your last vacation are lovely but don't help make you look work-ready. Change the focus to posting news and articles about the industry/type of job you are targeting; that becomes the information employers see first. Chapter 2





Write it down

Use a structure to

keep track of your

search. Finding

establish a job search routine to

reach your goal.

a job is a job;

Chapter 1

You need a resume

Skip the objective and include no more than 10 or 15 years of experience. Volunteer experience, particularly with leadership responsibility, can fill in gaps. This is a document you must be able to talk about. Chapter 5



Check your email

Create a work-friendly, professional email address just for your job search. Soccercoach5@ yahoo.com is not recommended. Keep job search emails separate so they won't get lost or buried in your inbox. Chapters 2 & 5



Write down your work history

Use the Personnel Data form to collect names, addresses, and telephone numbers of places where you've worked and

volunteered. Chapter 9



people your story

The #1-way people get jobs is through referrals. Tell everyone you know about your plans.

When you meet new people, tell them too. Write down names and contact information to follow up. Update or create a LinkedIn profile and grow your virtual business network.

Chapter 6



Apply for jobs online

Online applications take as long as an hour. The Personal Data Form makes it easier. Read everything and answer all questions. Don't check every box 'yes' for additional information about jobs, education or training. Check yes and you get tons of emails you don't need. Keep track of applications including logins and passwords. Chapter 8



Customize cover letters

Generic cover letters won't get noticed. Customized cover letters that include specifics and keywords will. Chapter 5



Interview

Describe your talent. Take your time answering questions. Have responses for gaps in your work history. Get names and contact information from interviewers so you can send a thank you note. You may be nervous but you won't be unprepared. Chapter 11



Be prepared for every step in the process including interviews by phone, video, and face to face. For both virtual and in-person interviews, dress to impress, but don't overdress. Find out what the organization's dress code is. Chapter 10



Take on leadership roles, add new experiences. Volunteer work adds to a resume or application and provides networking opportunities and references when people see the quality of what you do. You never know, volunteering can turn into a paid job.

Chapter 3





First Time Job Seeker A GUIDE TO THE JOB SEARCH TOOLKIT

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Where to now?

Review your skills, interests, and experience; use tools to identify a dream job, then see if work is available, and in a growing field. Match your strengths, education, and experience to jobs and careers where there are employment opportunities. Chapter 1

Check your social media

Make your online image workready. Take a critical look at all your social media. That Instagram after-party post, will not endear you to a potential employer. Follow companies and leaders that interest you. Post news about developments and trends in your chosen occupation. New professional content will rise above the party pics. Chapter 2



Use the Personal Data form to pull together names, addresses, and telephone numbers of places where you worked and volunteered. Chapter 9

Write it down

Use a structure to keep track of your search. Finding a job is a job. Establish a job search routine to reach your goal. Chapter 1

You need a resume

Get help writing a resume talk about all the content. Highlight any leadership and club membership or volunteering from school if your work

and make sure you can edit it and experience is minimal. Save it in Google Docs, as a Word document and PDF. Chapter 5

Tell people **vour story**

Success!

The #1-way people get jobs is through referrals. Tell everyone you know about your plans, including your relatives and their friends and colleagues. When you meet new people, tell them too. Write down names and contact information to follow up. Update or create a LinkedIn profile and grow your virtual network.

Chapter 6



Establish a professional phone presence

Check your email

Create a work-friendly,

professional email address just

for your job search. hottestbabe@

gmail.com is not recommended.

It's time to stop using .edu email.

Keep job search emails separate

so they don't get lost or buried in your inbox. Chapters 2 & 5

Answer every call politely and use a professional, clear message for callers when you can't pick up. Don't answer the phone with a suspicious, "who is this?" or, "What did you say the name of the company is? I don't remember applying for a job there." Chapter 2



Customize cover letters

Generic cover letters won't get noticed. Customized cover letters that include specifics and keywords will. Chapter 5

Broaden volunteer work

Take on leadership roles, add new experiences. Volunteer work adds to a resume or application, and provides networking opportunities and references. You never know, volunteering can turn into a paid job. Chapter 3



Describe your talent. Take your time answering questions. Get names and contact information from interviewers and send a thank you note. You may be nervous, but you won't be unprepared. Learn from every experience. Chapter 11

Prepare for interviews

Know the process. Respond with confidence to every step, from setting appointments by email and text to interviews by phone, video, and face to face. For both in-person interviews and virtual, dress to impress, but don't overdress. Check out the organization's dress code. Chapter 10





Your Career @ 50+ A GUIDE TO THE JOB SEARCH TOOLKIT

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Write it down

Use a structure to keep track of your search. Finding a job is a job. Establish a job search routine to reach your goal. Chapter 1

Where to now?

Create skill and experience inventories to identify target jobs. Use a mind map format, lists, and the resources described in Chapter 1. Looking for more? You may want to invest in the Clifton Strengths Assessment; gallupstrengthcenter.com Chapter 2

Check your social media

(O) Pictures of grandchildren, cats and dogs are nice. Focus on posting news and articles about the industry/type of job you are targeting so this is the top information employers see. Chapter 2





Write down your work history

Use the Personnel Data form to pull together names, addresses, and telephone numbers of places where you worked and volunteered.

Chapter 9



You need a resume.

Get help from another adult to write your resume. Skip the objective; include no more than 10 or 15 years of experience. This is a document you must be able to talk about. Your library, an Employment Center, and AARP Job Search Resources can help. Chapter 5



Check your email

Have a work-friendly email address. AOL email labels you as older and proudgrandpa@yahoo.com is not recommended. Write down the email address and password, and learn how to use them; on a computer, not just a cell phone. Find help using email and computers at your library. You are never too old to build computer skills. Chapters 2 & 5



Tell people your story

Success!

The #1-way people get jobs is through referrals. Tell everyone you know about your plans. When you meet new people, tell them too. Write down names and contact information to follow up. Create a LinkedIn profile and use the platform to apply for jobs. Chapter 6



Apply for jobs online

Online applications take as long as an hour. The Personal Data Form makes it easier. Read everything and answer all questions. Don't check every box 'yes' for additional information about jobs, education or training. Check yes and you get tons of emails you don't need. Keep track of applications including log-ins and passwords. Chapter 8



Customize cover letters

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Interview

Describe your talent. Take your time answering questions. Have responses for gaps in your work history. Get names and contact information from interviewers, send a thank you note. You may be nervous, but you won't be unprepared. Chapter 11



Be prepared for every step in the process including using email and text to schedule interviews and participating in telephone and video interviews. For both in-person interviews and virtual, dress to impress, but don't overdress. Find out what the organization's dress code is. Chapter 10



Volunteer work gives you experience to add to a resume or application, networking opportunities, and references from people who see the quality of your work. You never know, volunteering can turn into a paid job. Chapter 3



Re-entry Road Map

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What kind of work can you do? Write it down.

Know the jobs you won't be hired for; skip jobs that relate to your rap sheet. If you were Finding a job is your convicted of armed robberydon't plan on working in private homes without supervision. Chapter 1

Where can you work?

Find help, training and ex-offenderfriendly companies who have committed to The Fair Chance Pledge at www.fairshake.net. Be polite and professional with everyone you meet. (The employer list is here: https://www.fairshake.net/

fair-chance-employers/)

Chapter 4



Write down your work history.

Get names, addresses, and telephone numbers of places where you worked or volunteered. Chapter 9



You may need a resume.

Get help and be closely involved in the preparation. This is a document you must be able to talk about. Your library, a One Stop Center and non-profits can be your guide to resume writing. Chapter 5

new job. Start with a

notebook, pen, and

job search routine.

of your efforts.

Chapter 1

calendar. Establish a

Plan and keep track

I Check your email.

Have a work-friendly email address. bigbaddaddy@aol.com is not recommended. Write down the email and password and learn how to use it; on a computer, not just a cell phone. Find email and computer help at your local library. Chapters 2 & 5

Telephone tips.

Answer every call politely and use a professional, clear, message when you can't pick up. Don't have your own phone? Ask someone you trust if you can use their number and have them take a message if you get calls.

. Tell people you're looking for a job.

The #1-way people get jobs is referrals. Tell everyone you know you're looking for a job. When you meet new people, tell them too. Write down names and contact information to follow up. Keep Facebook work friendly, no photos of partying foul language, racist or sexist content. Chapter 6

Apply for jobs online Online applications take a long time. The Personal Data Form makes it easier. Read instructions and answer all questions. Don't check every box 'yes' that offer information about jobs, education or training. Check yes and you get tons of useless email. Keep track of applications including log-ins and passwords. Chapter 8

Find volunteer work.

Chapter 2

Volunteer work gives you experience to add to a resume or application and references from people who see the quality of what you do. You never know, volunteering can turn

into a paid job. Chapter 3



Answer the Criminal **Conviction Question**

In some states, and many cities and counties, there are laws that "ban the box." You can't be asked about criminal convictions until after you are offered a job. Prepare for when the question is allowed, stating facts not excuses, describe what you learned and how you have grown since incarceration.

Practice Interview Questions

It's ok to be nervous, it's not ok to be unprepared. Practice questions and then take your time answering. Have responses for gaps in your work history. Focus on what you learned and how you have grown, not excuses and blame. Get names and contact information from interviewers; send a thank you note.

Chapters 11 & 12

Prepare for interviews.

Be prepared for every step in the process; interviews by phone, video and face to face. Be on time but not too early. Wear neat and clean clothes, same with your hair, hygiene and any jewelry.

Chapter 10

