

MAKING A PLAN

Get Started the Right Way



KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE

Most of us don't have the option of being unemployed indefinitely. That's why you must quickly and thoroughly plan and execute your job search.

Chief tasks involved include:

- Evaluating your skills
- Determining the job you want
- Determining the labor market where you want to work
- Identifying companies you want to work for
- Developing a backup plan

BUILD A JOB SEARCH PLAN

If you spend quality time on your job search, you'll increase your chances of finding a job sooner. Careful planning will help you achieve the best results. A successful job search rarely happens accidentally, so plan to spend 30 hours or more per week on job search activities.

A successful job search plan involves:

- Setting goals
- Structuring your time
- Working your plan

EVALUATE YOUR SKILLS

Your skills are the things you do well. To be most effective in your job search, start to identify your key skills and qualifications.

Identifying your skills will help you:

- Focus your job search
- Answer the question, "Why should I hire you?"
- Clearly communicate your value to an employer
- Arrange your skills in priority patterns to apply to specific jobs
- Match your skills to your interests and job opportunities
- Write your resume

Practice in front of a mirror. What would you say to an employer if you were asked to describe your skills? Keep in mind that an employer evaluates how you answer the question, not just what you say.

Note: Employers say that most job applicants cannot effectively describe their skills.

THREE EMPLOYABLE SKILLS TO ADVERTISE

1. Job-specific Skills

These skills are related to a particular job. They are specialized and job-specific.

2. Transferable Skills

These are general skills that can be used in a variety of jobs.

3. Self-management Skills

These are your personal characteristics. They make it possible for you to handle yourself and adjust to a variety of situations.

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THE ACCOMPLISHMENT STATEMENT: A GLIMPSE OF YOU GETTING RESULTS

Employers are not only interested in the skills you have. They want to see how you can put your skills into action. To impress your next interviewer, talk about what you have done and the results your work has delivered.

This is where you document how you apply your talents on the job. You will use accomplishment statements to network, conduct a job search over the phone, write your resume and converse in an interview. Take time to reflect on the challenges you've faced in previous jobs, volunteer work, leisure activities or education.

Use the **CAR** (**C**hallenge, **A**ction, **R**esults) method to illustrate the challenges you faced at a previous or current job, the action you took to meet those challenges and the result you achieved. You can also include challenges you faced unsuccessfully to demonstrate your ability to learn from mistakes. For each challenge, list the skills you used along with the actions you took and the results of those actions. Be sure to use action words and numbers to show results.