

Monster Careers

How To Land The Job Of Your Life

About the Authors

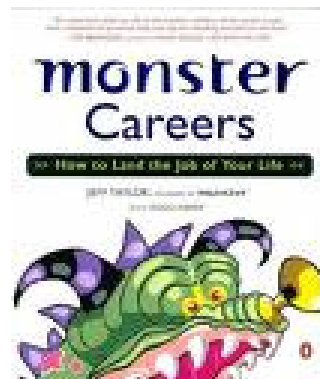


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Authors: Jeff Taylor with Doug Hardy
Publisher: Penguin Books, 2004
ISBN 0 14 200436 7
402 pages

■ The Big Idea

Where are you in your work life today? Are you looking for a job? Are you employed, but wondering if there's something better out there? Are you just entering the workforce? Are you stuck in a dead-end job? Are you happy with your career, but want to move up? Don't settle for an ordinary career!

Wherever you are, you need new job search strategies in order to survive and thrive in the modern corporate culture. Whatever stage of life you're in today, you can create and pursue a fresh and powerful vision for your career, and make your professional dreams come true.

Monster Careers provides a step-by-step plan for carrying out a supercharged job search – from exploring new career options to writing job-winning resumes and cover letters to mastering the interview and negotiating a job offer. You'll also learn how to thrive in your first months in the new job and set yourself up for continuing success.

Why You Need This Book

This practical and passionate guide will show you the way to build a meaningful and rewarding career.

MONSTER'S F.A.M.E. ATTITUDE

Monster's F.A.M.E. attitudes will make you stand out among candidates who just bump their way along in a conventional job search, as if the changes of the last twenty years never happened. The F.A.M.E. attitudes bring a new level of professional performance to your work at any time in your career; but in a job search, they are essential.

Think like a **F**ree agent. A free agent is not traditionally attached to one company. The free agent moves from one job to another, often juggling several jobs at once. That's why people think of free agents as doing "temporary" or "contract" assignments as opposed to so-called "permanent" positions. Having a free-agent attitude in a job search is key because it makes you view a "permanent" job as a contract, and thus treat it with more sense of urgency.

Train like an **A**thlete. Athletes know that they have to train hard before, during, and after every competition if they want to win. What does training mean in a job search? It means setting clear goals, making commitments, practicing basic moves to gain confidence, learning from mistakes, and keeping your focus. Athletes can teach candidates plenty of valuable lessons in keeping one's eye on the goal.

Prepare like a **M**arketer. Marketing is the business of making a clear impression. As you move through your career, each job search is an opportunity to develop, enhance, or change your "personal brand," that is, the package of skills and the professional reputation you present to employees.

Work like an **E**ntrepreneur. The work habits of entrepreneurs can teach you a lot about how to run a successful job search.

PLAN YOUR JOB SEARCH

There are three phases to a job search; preparation, getting up to speed, and going after job opportunities. The following ten-week model gives you two weeks

to get ready, three weeks to enter the marketplace, and five weeks of daily routines that keep the right job opportunities flowing through your job search “pipeline.”

Ten weeks is a suggestion, and you will adjust your own timetable as you go. Your job search may take more or less time based on uncontrollable factors like a changing economy, job vacancies, your level of experience, and the number of qualified applicants in your local area. You might want to adjust the time for each step based on your financial needs or level of seniority.

Plan for your search to take longer than you think, and you’ll be pleasantly surprised if you get a job quickly.

You are your own boss now, so set yourself a tough schedule. Most job seekers seem to start at 9:00 and run out of ideas by 10:30. But if you’re unemployed now, looking for work is your full time job. Ten weeks give you 400 hours, and you can get a lot done in 400 hours.

THE POWER OF RESEARCH

Job research has three goals:

- To widen your horizon early in the search. Too many people explore only two or three job possibilities, usually jobs they’re already familiar with. You may be a good fit for many different jobs.
- To inform your choices, so you know where to focus your energy (by location, company or industry) throughout the job search. This makes your search more powerful and (by the way) shorter.
- To arm you with real-time information about any employer. This helps you to stand out in the first interview.

Research is really just detective work – one clue leads to another --- and if you dive in with curiosity, you’ll find clues to jobs and employers everywhere.

WHERE JOBS ARE ADVERTISED

Millions of jobs are advertised every year, both online and offline. Here's where you will find them:

- The large job Web sites, where you can search for advertised jobs in your local area, in other locations, and even overseas.
- Company Web sites, which also advertise current openings. Some company Web sites also has open invitations to place your electronic resume in their database, so that they can find you when they have an appropriate opening.
- Traditional newspaper help-wanted sections, which are moving online at the newspapers' Web sites. Of course, some people prefer scanning the printed newspaper help-wanted sections.
- Magazines and trade journals also carry classified job advertisements.
- Job fairs, which gather many employers under one roof for a day or two, are a popular way for companies to market themselves. Job fairs are aimed at entry- to mid-level candidates. You'll find them in the classifieds and at state job centers, where you will also find various jobs advertised.

Don't forget bulletin boards in public areas like stores and churches. If you're looking for a private job (like housekeeping or pet grooming), you may find one there. Small local businesses use them, too. Keep your radar open.

NETWORKING

Does the word "networking" make you think of men and women in power suits passing out business cards? Actually, networking is nothing more than sharing information and building relationships. You do it every day with family, friends, and other acquaintances. All your existing relationships are a personal network, and a strong, ever-expanding personal network is a great way to find a job. After you start a new job, that network will help you do the job better.

Networking requires you to get out of your chair and into face-to-face discussions. That can bring up a lot of fear and self-doubt. After all, who likes to ask for a job? Remember, though, that networking isn't about asking for a job. Networking is about establishing relationships that generate job leads.

OBJECTIVES, THEIRS AND YOURS

Michael Neece, president of Interview Mastery, suggests you have four objectives in a job interview:

- ***Prove you meet the job's requirements.*** You must make a case that you have the skills to do the job, including softer or “hidden” requirements such as an ability to learn new information quickly. You must do this for each individual interviewer, finding out what’s important to him or her.
- ***Communicate clearly.*** Get your key messages across. Confirm you’re understood accurately.
- ***Build rapport.*** Get your interviewer to recognize you as an “ABC Company type of person.” It’s as simple as getting him or her to like you, and as complex as expressing your values in the context of the company culture. Rapport arises from those subtle clues, as well as from your demeanor.
- ***Gather feedback.*** Get specific feedback from each interviewer at the close of each meeting with questions like, “What strengths do you feel I bring to this position?” or, “What concerns do you have about my background?” You won’t get feedback unless you ask in a professional manner.

There are three “golden rules” you should follow in order to achieve your objectives for the interview:

- ***Listen and clarify.*** Remember that free-agent habit of becoming an incredible listener? You have to treat the conversation as an opportunity to learn. Clarify important points by feeding them back: “Just to make sure I have this right, you’ve told me that you require three years of technical experience. How else, besides length of experience, do you judge technical proficiency?”
- ***Prove your case with achievement stories.*** Once a candidate can swear he’s qualified to do the job, he is, in effect saying, “trust me.” Another candidate can relate quantified achievements, proving she can do the job with figures and actual experiences. Which would you hire?

- **Get your key messages across.** Answer questions in a way that keeps supporting the key messages of your pitch. Bring them into the conversation. For example, if one of a salesperson's key messages is "I open new accounts," she will want to mention "opening new accounts" several times in a job interview.

HOW TO KNOW IF A JOB IS RIGHT FOR YOU

They want you. Do you want them? This process actually began when you were asking questions during the interview. Make sure you know the answers to the following:

- Do you have a complete picture of the job's responsibilities, authority, goals, and measures for success?
- Will you and your new boss work well together?
- Are you convinced there's a good match of skills, experience, and culture? Do you really want to be part of this company? Do you want to serve its mission?
- Will you have the resources (people, technology, money, and time) to do the job? Do they want you to succeed?
- Does this job have a clear growth path?
- Does your research convince you that this company is going to be around in five years? How important is that to you?
- What have your references, networking contacts, and friends told you about the company? The position?
- Is the job located in the right place? What are the expected work hours? How's the commute?
- How does your spouse or significant other feel about this offer?

MAKE A CHANGE

You made a lot of professional changes to build a good job search. Here are a couple of activities that can help you take advantage of the transition time, and move that new attitude into your new job:

- Before you start a new job, write five strengths and weaknesses from your last job. Privately determine that you're going to change one or two of those weak behaviors in your next job. They don't have to be big changes.
- A lot of people at mid-career wear the same clothes every day. A new job is a great opportunity to update your wardrobe (or your look) a little. You don't have to break the bank to make a statement that the good changes are permanent.
- Develop one new work habit that will make you more productive. Perhaps it's an organizing habit you already practiced in your job search.
- It's a great time to start working out, start eating better, or learn a new skill. You've just proven to yourself that you can make positive changes happen in your work life, so why stop at that?
- The great management teacher Peter Drucker suggests this powerful trick: Just before beginning a new job, write down what you expect will happen. Then check that statement six months or a year later. You'll get a reality check on where you are and whether you have been effective.
- People's expectations of you are open, so think of a change that's fun. Always wanted a nickname but never had one? Introduce yourself with your new name on day one! Within a few months, instead of hearing "Hello, Jeffrey," you'll hear "Hey, JT!"
- Mark a day on your calendar ten days into your new job. On that day, spend one hour reviewing your F.A.M.E. principles.

PRACTICE GOOD HABITS

It's said that if you practice a behavior for twenty-one days, it's a habit. So your first month in the company is the time to practice good habits and wipe out bad ones.

- ***Find a mentor.*** Look for an experienced person who has been with the company for a few years. Have regular conversations about what is going on in the company, and why. Your boss may be a good candidate for this role, or it may be someone in another part of the company.
- ***Play fairly and openly with other, and leave office politics to the office politicians.***
- ***If you cannot avoid office politics, still play fairly and openly with others.***
- ***Keep confidences.***
- ***Keep upgrading the work habits you planned to improve.***
- ***Mix it up with colleagues, staff, peers – don't get isolated.***
- ***Send e-mail updates to your personal network every four to eight weeks.***
- Work on these habits and you get to transform your current position into that dream job you have always wanted.
