

Business Briefs

Job-search tips for those facing a buyer's market

The economic downturn and rising unemployment rates have made good jobs scarce and competition for the preferred positions fierce.

For almost every position, recruiters are receiving up to 10 times as many resumés as they did in 1989.

The human resource department at Nike Inc. estimates it receives 500 unsolicited resumés each week. In this kind of atmosphere, it takes more than a shoeshine to get inside the corporate door.

"It's clearly a buyer's market for employers at this time," said Janis Hailey, human resource manager, Nike Inc., in Memphis.

"When sifting through the resumé pile, human resource managers now look for reasons to screen applicants out rather than screen them in," said Mary Ann Luciano, assistant vice president of recruiting and retention for Olsten Temporary Services.

Based on feedback from its client base of more than 100,000 companies throughout North America, including the Fortune 1000, Olsten Temporary Services offers the following tips on conducting a successful job search in the 1990s.

Starting the Search

- Remember that getting a job is a job unto itself. If you are currently unemployed, make the search your fulltime job. If you have a job, set aside a few hours a day, either during lunch, in the evenings, or on weekends.

- Getting a job is generally easier when you are employed so don't quit your present job until you have accepted another one.

- If you cold call, get as much information about each company as possible. Check classifieds to see if they are already advertising for positions. When inquiring about openings, be job specific and know what you are looking for.

- Networking is very effective. Even if one company cannot hire you, ask if they know of anyone else in the industry who is looking for someone with your skills.

Resumés

- Be specific, demonstrate clearly and concisely that you are qualified for the position for which you are applying.

- Address most recent accom-

plishments and responsibilities first.

- If you have one to five years of professional experience, your resumé should never exceed one page in length. With five or more years, it should never exceed two pages.

- If applying for positions in different industries, write one version of your resumé to target each industry.

- If you know someone who is already working in your industry, ask him to review your resumé.

Cover Letter

- Always attach a brief, business-like cover letter to your resumé. Because many resumés are being professionally developed, remember that cover letters now take on more weight.

- If possible, personalize the letter, making sure to check the spelling of the company name and the recipient's name. Include recipient's title.

- State precisely which position you are applying for and how you qualify.

- Write with the reader's needs in mind. Express how your experience fits the job description and how you can contribute to the company's busi-

ness objectives.

Interviewing

- Research the company beforehand. Get an annual report. Read newspaper or magazine articles on the company. Speak to other companies in the same industry. Visit the site. Knowledge of a potential employer's business will never fail to impress him.

- Rehearse and be prepared to do about 75% of the talking. An interviewer will want to see how effectively you can express yourself and how knowledgeable you are about his industry.

- Cite specific examples of how your past professional experience is relative to the position for which you are applying, and how your skills relate to the company's needs.

- Ask questions about the company and about the position to demonstrate your interest and initiative.

- Be prepared to answer questions concerning where you see yourself in the next three to five years.

- If you are looking to change jobs, be prepared to say why.

- Remember that a top priority for most companies is work ethic. If you worked your way through college, had part-time jobs while in school, or have recently been promoted, make an opportunity to communicate this to the interviewer.

- Take meaningful, but not copious notes during the interview. In most cases, this is an accepted practice.

- Don't ask about benefits on the first interview.

References

- References should be able to indicate your professional accomplishments, rather than just what a nice person you are.

- Make sure that your references

are aware of possible calls from prospective employers, and of the positions for which you are applying.

- Prepare a formal list of references, with names, titles, addresses, and phone numbers, that you can give to a potential employer upon request.

Computers & Office Automation

- If you are computer literate, be sure to mention it.

- If you have taken outside classes in computer applications, mention it on your resumé and in interviews.

- If appropriate to the job, communicate your ability to operate standard office equipment such as computers, fax machines, voice mail systems and photocopiers.

NCDOT to host Civil Rights Conference

The N.C. Department of Transportation (NCDOT) will host the Federal Highway Administration, Region IV Civil Rights Conference April 8-12, in Charlotte.

Local and state government officials will be trained on the new policies and procedures for administering the goals program for highway construction projects that have federal participation.

Members of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) will have the opportunity to meet with those government representatives who assist DBEs in the process of participating in highway construction projects.

More than 1,000 DBE contractors have

been invited to the conference.

"The U.S. Congress will be working on the reauthorization bill for the Surface Transportation Act of 1991," said C. Morgan Edwards, an assistant secretary for the NCDOT. "It is anticipated that the new act will continue the goals program with a 10% goal for DBEs.

"This could mean billions of dollars in federal-aid state projects for the DBE contracting community.

"At the state level, the \$9.2 billion Highway Trust Fund Program, approved by the N.C. General Assembly in 1989, includes a 10% goal for minorities and a 5% goal for women," said Edwards.

Other Region IV states have similar programs for awarding disadvantaged business contracts.

Region IV consists of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee and Kentucky. Virginia and other Region III representatives may also attend the conference.

The biannual conference will be held at the Charlotte Marriott City Center in downtown Charlotte.

For additional information concerning the conference, contact Jerry Armstrong in the NCDOT Office of Civil Rights at (919) 733-2300 or P.O. Box 25201, Raleigh, N.C. 27611.

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Something for the young & young at heart

Chronicle Staff Report

With spring in the air and summer vacation not far behind, keeping young folks busy in a productive and creative way can be a challenge. But, there are a number of programs available.

The Creative Children's Theatre offers a place where young people can actually perform onstage. A group of dancers, actors, and musicians decided to reach out to the talented children they saw in the community who were not focusing their energy in the right direction and steer them in a more productive outlet of their talents.

The Creative Children's Theatre began by offering classes in singing, acting, dance, and movement with the goal of having the children perform and exhibit their talents.

Dorothy Bigby, the director of the Creative Children's Theatre, emphasizes their programs are open to all children in the area. However, children must audition to participate. There is a scholarship fee for each student.

The Love Community Choir offers a unique opportunity for children to be exposed to and perform some wonderful music. It was formed in 1985 with Laura Wall and eight children. Since its incep-

tion, its roll has grown to contain approximately 110 names of children from all over the country. Its founding purpose was to give the children creative ways to enhance their lives.

The Choir is open to all children and meets every Saturday from 12 noon until 1:30 p.m. at the Winston Lake YMCA. It provides an outlet for the children to express themselves and improve their self-esteem, and it shows them the value of giving back to the community. They perform anywhere they are invited in the community.

Another choir is also available for young people. The Spirit of Life Community Choir, originally formed to involve children in the area in the Martin Luther King Tribute "Shine the Light" earlier this year and co-sponsored by the Ambassadors for Christ Choir and Urban Arts of The Arts Council Inc., has become a permanently active youth choir in the city.

Directed by David Allen, the choir is open to any children interested in participating. It meets twice a month on Saturdays at 10 a.m. at the Ambassador's Cathedral. It offers a great alternative for youth for positive self-expression.

Dancers Unlimited has recently reorganized since its initial annual recital in 1982. The group offers

children of all ages the opportunity and access to free dance classes every Saturday at the C. E. Gaines Complex on the campus of Winston-Salem State University. The organization's director, producer, and choreographer, Ms. Wyenia Mathews, strongly believes in the mission of her group. Children are given an opportunity to develop self-confidence and self-esteem through the discovery of their natural talents.

The Afternoon Music Program, organized by Ms. Fostenia Holman, also makes its home at WSSU. Each semester at the college, Ms. Holman and three other music teachers from the Winston-Salem area accept approximately twenty children and teach them piano and handbells after school. The classes provide a place where young people can become musically literate.

First Baptist Church of East Winston created the Summer Adventure Camp with children in mind. Ms. Louise Smith, Director of Christian Education at the church, believes this special camp, which is open to all ages from infants to senior high school students, can offer the children something special to do over the summer. Summer Adventure Camp runs Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m.

"Reinvestments in the Community" is a weekly column appearing in API publications throughout the USA.