NEWS RELEASE

Successful Job Seekers Reveal Job Search Strategies

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Survey shows key behaviors and attitudes that produce employment results

DOWNERS GROVE, Ill.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- The most effective job seekers — those perceived as the "complete package" by hiring managers — target and customize their searches, and are organized and realistic about their opportunities. The 2015 Successful Job Seekers research explores these behaviors and investigates the critical factors and personal traits job seekers feel contributed most to their success in finding employment.

The survey of 589 U.S. professionals of varying ages and in different roles and industries was conducted in March 2015 by the Career Advisory Board, established by DeVry University. Respondents were classified as either passive job seekers, who were recruited by desirable companies and received offers without conducting searches, or active job seekers, who accepted jobs less than six months after starting proactive searches. The Career Advisory Board synthesized the research to help job seekers improve their employment outcomes.

2015 Successful Job Seekers Research Key Findings

Successful job seekers are selective and focus on specific targets.

- Active job seekers were very selective about targeting individual companies and applying to open positions. More than one-half applied to five or fewer positions and two-thirds applied to 10 or fewer.
- Candidates believed matching their qualifications with job requirements was important; 90 percent of active job seekers wanted to be at least 75 percent qualified before applying for a position.
- This targeted approach proved highly effective, as nearly one-third of active job seekers were interviewed for more than half the positions to which they applied.

Customizing job applications was a critical success factor in capturing employers' attention.

- Nearly 70 percent reached out to a contact person to find out more about the position, and approximately the same number (67 percent) submitted résumés containing keywords and skills

listed in the job description.

Showcasing both job-specific and interpersonal skills during interviews paints the most robust picture of candidate qualifications.

- Once an interview had been secured, 84 percent of both active and passive job seekers updated or created new résumés that included keywords and skills listed in that specific job description.
- A majority of respondents prepared for interviews by reviewing the company's website or Googling the company, and nearly one-half brainstormed concrete examples of how their skills matched the job description.
- Most respondents seized the opportunity to display good business skills by emailing timely thank-you notes following an interview.

"Results from our annual survey of hiring managers (The Job Preparedness Indicator study) tell us that hiring managers want hires who meet 100 percent of the criteria now," said Madeleine Slutsky, chair of the Career Advisory Board and vice president of Career and Student Services at DeVry University. "This latest research proves that when job seekers go the extra mile to demonstrate why they are right for a particular position — by customizing their résumés and being prepared to be specific about their potential contributions in an interview – they meet this need and often succeed in getting offers."

Finding a job doesn't need to be a full-time job, but it does require dedicated time.

- While some career advisors suggest treating a job search like a full-time job, 45 percent of our respondents spent less than one hour a day and 47 percent spent one to three hours a day on search activities.
- However, the youngest respondents (18–26 years) spent much more time on job-search activities than careerists over age 41, many of whom spent less than an hour per day.
- The majority of successful job seekers were meticulous in how they researched, identified and contacted desirable companies; 73 percent of respondents kept detailed files on each opportunity, and 64 percent maintained weekly to-do lists.

Successful job seekers don't hide behind digital outreach; they use every opportunity to connect and be seen.

- Somewhat surprisingly, most respondents did not uncover potential job opportunities through social media. Only 33 percent used LinkedIn "occasionally" or "frequently."
- Successful job seekers used a mix of search techniques such as querying friends, family and business contacts about companies, and attending in-person networking events, conferences and industry gatherings.

"Hiring managers still view a candidate's attitude as a key differentiator in securing a position and in job success," said Alexandra Levit, business and workplace consultant and Career Advisory Board member. "Attributes such as willingness to learn, adaptability and self-confidence often outweigh tangible skills and credentials."

To read the research report and strategic advice from the Career Advisory Board to help candidates enhance their marketability and land desirable jobs more quickly, please visit www.careeradvisoryboard.org.

About the Career Advisory Board

Established in 2010 by DeVry University, the Career Advisory Board is comprised of leading representatives from business and academia, and recognized career experts who deliver valuable insights on today's most important career trends and provide actionable advice for job seekers. The Career Advisory Board generates original research and commentary, and creates tools, insights and resources to prepare job seekers for success. Its members include executives from DeVry University, Google, HP, IBM, and LinkedIn, as well as nationally recognized career experts. For more information, visit http://careeradvisoryboard.org.

Survey Methodology

The Career Advisory Board's Successful Job Seekers research was designed to uncover the actions and traits of individuals who were able to land new jobs quickly in a market where hiring managers are increasingly selective and many candidates go months or years without employment.

The research was conducted online within the United States by DeVry University on behalf of the Career Advisory Board in March 2015. Survey respondents included 589 U.S. professionals who had accepted a new job in the last year, and who received an interview for that role within six months of being recruited or starting a new job search.

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