

# Top 10 ways to snag the job you really want

Allison Brinkman, an account manager with Eisen Management Group, credits David Letterman with getting her a new job. Right out of school, she faced the tough task of finding her first job. When asked at a job interview what she could bring to the company, she responded jokingly with a prepared David Letterman-style Top 10 list. The No. 1 reason for hiring her was "she wouldn't stop bugging him until he gave her the job." That unique and tenacious approach got her hired.

Taking my cue from Letterman, here are my top 10 tips for getting the job you want and a salary to match.

1. Networking is still the best way to find a job. Now, however, you have online tools that can make it easier to build and stay in touch with your network. Use them, and then get out from behind your computer and network, network, network.

2. Don't limit yourself. In today's economy, you need to pursue all avenues, including job boards, recruiters, ads, mailings, company websites. Create a job search plan and discipline yourself to spend time each day pursuing a number of different job search activities. Be sure to follow up.

3. Tailor your résumé to each employer. Emphasize those skills and experiences that are most important to the organization you are seeking employment with. Online résumés have to be general, but should focus on accomplishments. Offer to provide additional information if there is an interest. That way you can tailor your



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other opportunities. If the employer likes you, it may be possible to redefine the position or there may be another more appropriate position available now, or in the future, for which they will think of you.

6. Learn everything you can about a potential employer. Research the job and the interviewer as well. The key to turning an interview into a job

is preparation and enthusiasm. People want to hire people who really want to work for them. So let them know you really want the job and why. That requires having a lot of information about the organization.

7. Put everything in its best possible light. Always be positive when talking about yourself, even when asked to describe your weaknesses. (e.g. "I tend to care too much about getting everything right," although a little disingenuous, is a lot better than "I have a bad habit of stealing pens from the office"). Never say anything bad about a prior employer, even if it's true. The prospective employer won't know if what you are saying is true or false but will wonder if you will talk about them that way after you leave their employ.

8. Everyone you meet is important in the employment process. Go out of your way to make friends with the secretaries involved in the hiring process. They can help you and provide you with valuable information.

9. Focus on what is most important to the employer. Find out what things at work keep your prospective boss up at night and show how you can help him or her get a better night sleep by fixing those problems.

10. Don't assume you can't negotiate a better deal. You can if you know how and when to do so.



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4. Develop a powerful internet presence. Be everywhere an employer might look for someone with the skills and experience you have to offer. Join professional network websites such as LinkedIn. Create a Facebook page that highlights your professional, rather than personal, life. Post profiles on the private networks that many professional organizations offer to their members. Also, if you are doing volunteer work with nonprofits that have their own networks, be sure to post profiles there. To help companies find you, online résumés should include searchable words associated with the jobs you are seeking.

5. Go to every interview. Even if you don't think the job or compensation is exactly right for you, it may lead to

16. Don't assume you can't negotiate a better deal. You can if you know how and when to do so. Avoid talking about salary, or talk about it as little as possible, until you get an offer, at which point you will be in the best position to negotiate.

Contrary to what is generally believed, there is usually no one candidate that is clearly more qualified than all of the rest. What gets someone hired is they are more likeable, fit in better, wow the interviewer with some particular success or simply focus more on what is important to the person making the hiring decision. To be hired, you have to find a positive way to stand out from the other candidates. Following these 10 tips will help you do just that.

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