5 Job Search Tips for a Competitive Market

Below are FIVE steps to help you effectively compete in today's job market. The Career Development Center has hundreds of resources available to help you along the way. There is more information about each step below on our website at: www.spu.edu/depts/cdc.

STEP ONE: Create a Resume That Employers Will Want to Read
- Keep it concise – one page.
- Highlight your strengths and tailor your resume to fit the specific position you're applying for.
- Make sure there are absolutely no mistakes in grammar or spelling. Typos are killers. Do not use a resume template – many employers do not like this format.

STEP TWO: Market Yourself Through Contacts and Networking
- Talk with friends, family, classmates, professors, alumni, neighbors and career center staff.
- Search SPU's jobnet and other online listings.
- Attend career fairs, networking events and employer information sessions.
- Research companies to match your interests and values with their opportunities.
- Schedule informational interviews to get the "ground-level" perspective from active professionals.

STEP THREE: Compose a Powerful and Persuasive Cover Letter
- Customize it for specific jobs and companies.
- Introduce yourself and discuss your interest in the position and the organization.
- Discuss your relevant education and experience.
- Briefly highlight your qualifications related to the job.
- Keep it simple and error free.

STEP FOUR: Ace The Interview
- Practice makes perfect! Polish your skills and increase your confidence by doing practice interviews and participating in campus interviews.
- Research the position, company and the industry before your interview.
- Ask for clarification if you don't understand a question. Don't be afraid to admit you don't know an answer, but follow up with genuine curiosity and interest to learn more.
- Create a good impression by paying close attention to appearance (suit or shirt and tie and sports coat for men/ suit or professional dress for women, minimal jewelry, no fragrance), attitude and manners (be on time!).
- Illustrate your answers to interview questions with powerful stories.
- Prepare and ask good questions.

STEP FIVE: Follow-Up After the Interview – a little known way to help you to stand out.
- Write a thank you note. Follow up on the phone.
- Keep in touch with job contacts.

Some Final Advice......
Don't be lazy. You have competition! Don't ignore any job leads.
Don't get caught unprepared. Don't be a know-it-all.
Don't be pushy but also don't be afraid to sell yourself. Don't forget to follow-up.