

# 10

# STEPS TO FINDING A GREAT JOB

BY HILLARY HOLBROOK

*With preparation, patience, and perseverance, you can find a job that's right for you.*

**A**re you 16 and looking for your first job? Or are you in college and looking for a job between semesters? Whether or not it's your first time seeking a job, the experience can seem intimidating. But with preparation and a willing attitude, you may find it easier to step out of your comfort zone and into the working world. Here are 10 tips:

## 1. Start early.

The best time to begin looking for work is before you are desperate. If you need a summer job, start looking in winter. If you want a great internship as a senior, start preparing for it as a sophomore or junior. Employers like employees who plan ahead.

## 2. Be realistic, but keep the big picture in mind.

To begin with, you may have to take whatever work is available. You may have to work to gain experience and show that you can be dependable. Any honest work is worthy of respect, and a great job—for now—may simply be one that provides employment. But if you can find a job that's interesting *and* that matches up with your long-term goals, you'll not only be working, you'll be working toward something.



## 3. Take a look at yourself.

You're more likely to get a job you'll enjoy if you know what you're looking for. Ask yourself: What are my talents? What do I like to do? What am I passionate about? What do I want to be 5 or 10 years from now? If you love nature, look for work at a summer camp or a store that sells outdoor equipment. If you love technology, look at an electronics or computer store.

Here's a word of warning: Be prepared for realities. When I was in college I thought about majoring in agricultural journalism. At first, I was excited when I was hired to work on a dairy farm. But it didn't take me long to realize that being around manure and sour milk was something I would never enjoy.

#### 4. Think about others.

Now ask yourself: Do I interact well with other people, or do I prefer to work on my own? How can I bless others through my skills and abilities? You can help other people by working in a team, but you may also find that you'll help by providing a service on your own. In either case, you'll find greater fulfillment when you see how your work blesses others.

#### 5. Talk to friends and family members.

According to LDS Employment Resource Services, over one-third of jobs are found by networking—talking to those you know, like friends and family members. You may be surprised how often people know other people who can open a door for you. If your uncle knows someone who is hiring people, see if he'll refer you. If your friend has a job she enjoys, ask her how she got it, and if there are additional positions available. If you apply, she might be able to put in a good word for you.

#### 6. Use the phone book.

It might seem outdated to think that big, fat book (or the online equivalent) can help in the job hunt, but it can help you find local employers in areas you're interested in. LDS Employment Resource Services says approaching a company directly is the second-best way to find a job.



#### 7. List your qualifications.

Think about what you can contribute as an employee. Though most jobs you will apply for at this time in your life will not require a résumé, you may want to prepare one. A résumé is a summary of your work skills, experience, personal interests, and accomplishments. Whether you feel experienced or not, you may be surprised at the

## DRESS FOR SUCCESS

**A** good rule of thumb when meeting or interviewing with any future employer is to dress one step up from how the employees dress at the place you'd like to work.

For example, if you're applying to be a lifeguard at a swimming pool where the dress code is swimming apparel, T-shirts, and shorts, you might want to go to the interview dressed in khaki pants and a polo shirt. If you're applying to work at a bank where the dress code consists of blazers, skirts, or suit pants, then you'll want to wear a tie or, if you're female, a blouse with a nice skirt.

If you have a scheduled interview, arrive a few minutes early, but never arrive late. Greet the interviewer with a warm smile and handshake. See the list of do's and don'ts for advice on interview appearance.



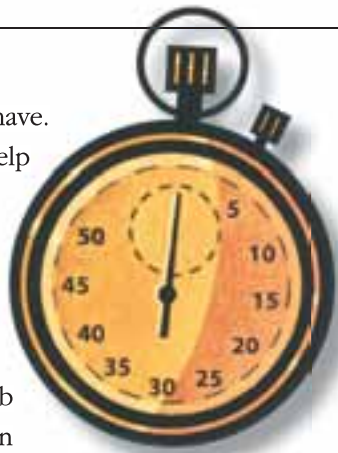
qualifications you already have. Have a parent or teacher help you with the wording for your résumé.

### 8. Prepare a 30-Second summary.

The first question in a job interview is often “What can you tell me about yourself?” What employers are looking for is basic information that is significant to the job. What they are not looking for is where you were born or what your favorite color is.

Prepare a three-to-five sentence response in advance, and make a good impression: “I am a responsible person who is trustworthy and punctual. I enjoy being around people and serving them, so learning to work in a restaurant will be no problem. I can handle many different tasks at one time. I have shown leadership skills in my church group for young women ages 14 to 15, where I’ve helped to plan activities, attended meetings, and met weekly commitments.”

Have a parent or writing teacher help you write a statement tailored for you, the job you want, and the qualifications you have. Then try to memorize it and say it in 30 seconds. Practice a few times with a parent or a friend, or out loud by yourself.



## NOW IS THE TIME

“*Now is the time* to prepare for training, education, and an occupation. . . . Decide now to do your best in school and at work. Then, when opportunities knock, you will be ready to open the door and take advantage of them. We should all remember: ‘To every man is given a gift’ (D&C 46:11). Develop your gifts and talents. . . . Prayerfully select classes, training programs, and jobs that will prepare you for greater opportunities and more responsibility in the future.”

**Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “To the Aaronic Priesthood: Preparing for the Decade of Decision,” *Ensign*, May 2007, 49–50.**

## DO'S AND DON'TS FOR INTERVIEWS

### DO

- **Come prepared** with a few neatly printed, mistake-free résumés. You might be handing out more than one at the job site.

- **Look professional.** This means dressing modestly, wearing appropriate shoes and attire, and being clean, well-groomed, and (for men) fresh-shaven.

- **Make eye contact,** and greet the interviewer with a warm smile and friendly handshake. Introduce yourself.

- **Ask questions.** The interview is an opportunity for you to learn about the job you’ve applied for. You may want to prepare a short, written list of questions ahead of time. The employer will ask, “Do you have any questions for me?” Ask what the job duties are and how much you’ll be expected to work.

- **Thank the employer** for the interview and time spent. If you still want the job afterward, send a thank-you note and follow up when the time is appropriate.

### DON'T

- **Don’t wear a lot of jewelry.** A set of small earrings is OK for girls, but no hoops or multiple bracelets, rings, or necklaces.

- **Don’t bring your cell phone.** Leave it in the car or at home.

- **Don’t wear strong perfume or aftershave.** You don’t want to distract the interviewer.

- **Don’t chew gum,** but do make sure your breath is fresh.





## THANK-YOU NOTES

It sounds old-fashioned, but writing a thank-you note can do a lot for you when you're trying to get a job. A thank-you card can keep you on the employer's radar screen as a potential hire. Write the note by hand and hand-deliver it, if possible, after every contact with the employer. The note might say something like this:

"Dear Mrs. (or Mr.) \_\_\_\_\_:

Thank you for spending time with me. I learned many great things about your company and have an even greater desire to work for you.

Sincerely,  
(your name)"

### 9. Make personal contacts.

Now that you've prepared, you're ready to contact potential employers. Although many will ask you to apply online, going to the workplace shows your interest and may land you an interview on the spot, so dress accordingly (see the list of do's and don'ts for advice on appearance). Remember to present yourself well even in preliminary contacts.

### 10. Follow through.

If you're not given an interview immediately, do the best you can to keep the ball in *your* court. That means if the employer tells you they will be calling you back in seven days with an interview time or decision, you ought to call them on day eight if you haven't heard back. Be polite in asking if a time has been scheduled or a decision made.

Finding a job isn't always easy, but keep in mind that the more persistent you are, the stronger the chances are that you'll get a job. Remember to pray to Heavenly Father for the guidance of the Spirit. "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:6). **NE**

For more tips on getting a job, go to [providentliving.org](http://providentliving.org), click Employment, and then click Tips to Get You Hired.

## GROWING JOB AREAS

The jobs expected to have the greatest increase in numbers over the next seven years:

1. Registered nurses
2. Retail salespersons
3. Customer service representatives
4. Combined food preparation and serving workers, including fast food
5. Office clerks, general
6. Personal and home care aides
7. Home health aides
8. Postsecondary teachers
9. Janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeeping cleaners
10. Nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants
11. Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks
12. Waiters and waitresses
13. Child-care workers
14. Executive secretaries and administrative assistants
15. Computer software engineers, applications
16. Accountants and auditors
17. Landscaping and grounds-keeping workers
18. Business operation specialists
19. Elementary school teachers, except special education
20. Receptionists and information clerks

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2008-09 Edition; available at [www.bls.gov/oco](http://www.bls.gov/oco)

