

Six Steps to Getting a Job

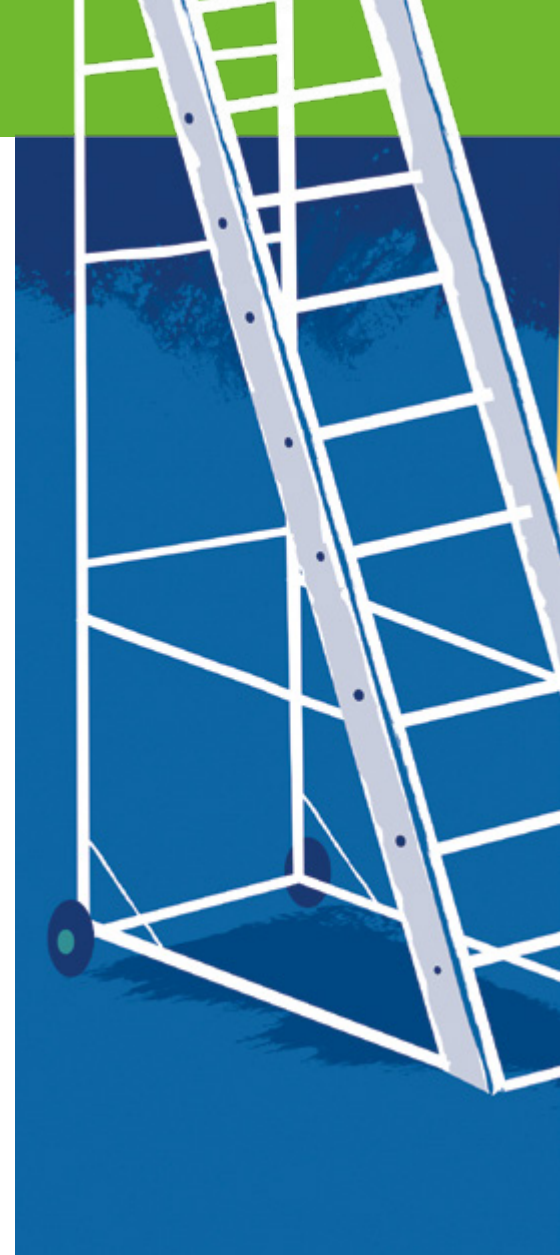
By Bruno Vassel III

We can't be temporally self-reliant if we need a job and don't have one. Here are six steps to becoming employed.

Do you need employment or a better job? Know someone who does? The challenge today for so many people who desperately need employment or a better job is that they're often not sure how to get the job they want. They ask, "Do I write a résumé, put myself on the internet, or do both, and how?" "What is the right way to answer questions like, 'What are your weaknesses?' and 'Why should I hire you for this job?'"

This article shares a six-step plan of what you must know and then do to get the job you want. These six steps are based in part on the results of a survey I conducted on the hiring practices of 760 employers who were recruiting at Brigham Young University. These steps were also developed from information I received from hiring experts and over 30 years of employment and recruiting training I gave to thousands of people in over 20 countries. Finally, my wife and I recently served as senior missionaries assigned to implement Self-Reliance Services throughout Europe. Our experiences reinforced to us that job seekers need this specific help. Regardless of where you live in the world, what your job skills are, or what job position you want to obtain, these six steps can help you.

This process of getting the job you want can take anywhere from a few days to weeks or even months, but the good news is that this process works. These six steps can help job seekers at all levels who fit into one of three categories: (1) those looking for their first job, (2) those wanting to move to another job or get promoted within their current company or organization, and (3) those wanting to move to a position in another organization.



Step 1. Identify the specific job you want now.

You must identify a realistic job that you can perform right now, that fits your own work-related skills, background, accomplishments, or education. Once you decide, write down the job's title. If you need help, various websites list many different job titles and descriptions. For step 1, you don't need to find a job opening; just identify the type of job that you are qualified for and interested in.



With several job options in front of you, what are the next steps to take to get the job that's right for you?

Two of the biggest mistakes job search candidates make are to not decide on a specific job that they really want or to pick a position for which they are not qualified. If you're not sure what specific job to look for and pursue, then you may end up not getting any job at all. Saying something like, "I just need a job, any job" is not helpful. Saying this does not impress prospective employers and damages your own job search efforts. So pick a specific job you can do now, and then focus on getting that job.

Step 2. Find the job description for the job you want.

The survey I conducted with the 760 employers who recruited at Brigham Young University and my years of employment experience in many countries showed that recruiters and hiring managers almost always consider only candidates for a specific job who have the correct work-related skills, experience, accomplishments, or education for that job. This is especially true for middle- and upper-level positions. As

they carefully consider candidates, these recruiters use an outline or list called a job description to remember the most critical requirements of each open job. The hiring person then compares all candidates to that position's specific description.

You must find the job description for the job you want. It will help you decide if you really are a good candidate for that job. It will also help you decide what to say and not say about yourself on your résumé, in cover



letters, and in interviews with employers. Employers usually list the job description for each of their open jobs on their website, in newspaper ads, and on job search websites. Current workers who know the job may also be able to tell you about the open job's description and requirements.

Your task in step 2 is to find the specific requirements listed in the job description for the job you want. You'll then use that key information in steps 3–6.

Step 3. Identify your skills, experiences, job results, and education that fit the job you've selected.

Here is where you identify your own personal skills and work-related accomplishments that show that your background really does match the critical

requirements of the job you now want, as described in the job description you found in step 2.

As you make this list of your work-related skills and accomplishments, you'll then be able to compare your work background with the key qualifications shown in the job description you found in step 2. If your list shows that your skills match up nicely with the needs of the job you selected in step 1, then move forward now to steps 4–6. If, however, your skills and accomplishments you listed in step 3 don't match up nicely with the job description you found in step 2, then you should seriously consider picking another job to pursue at this time, one that more closely matches your current skills and abilities.

Step 4. Write a customized one- or two-page résumé.

A main purpose of your résumé, also called a curriculum vitae, is to get an interview with the recruiter or hiring person who's looking to fill the open position. Your résumé does this by briefly showing the hiring person that your work-related skills, experience, accomplishments, or education fit what the employer's job description says are the most important characteristics of an ideal candidate for that job.

The résumé you write for each different employer's open job *must be customized*. You don't need to change the same core data that you'll include on all your



Customize your résumé for each job. List the skills and accomplishments that are relevant to the job description.

résumés, like your employment history, your school information, and your current contact information. Those details will be the same on all your résumés. But if you apply for a job with more than one employer, each employer will have a somewhat different or very different job description for their job. Therefore, you must select which of your skills and accomplishments are relevant to each job description. Put those onto your résumé as concise statements that start with a descriptive verb, such as “researched,” “developed,” “produced,” “managed,” and so on.

For example, if you had work experience in both sales and marketing and you were applying for two different jobs—one focusing on sales and the other on marketing—then you would develop two résumés, one sharing more of your sales activities and accomplishments and the other sharing more of your marketing accomplishments and activities. (If you don’t have much work experience yet, visit [ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/71939](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/71939) to learn how to use experience from your Church service on your résumé.)

Step 5. Find employers who are now hiring people for the job you want.

There are always some open jobs to be filled, even in very hard times. Employees retire, change jobs, get promoted, get demoted, or move away. And there are always some businesses growing and needing more workers. All of these

situations lead to jobs becoming available that need to be filled by qualified candidates. Sometimes this happens in small trickles and sometimes in floods of open jobs to be filled. So don’t get discouraged if you haven’t found a job yet. Just keep looking for that job for you.

Look on employers’ websites, career websites, newspaper ads, and other sources for the job you want. Also, one of the best ways to find open jobs is by networking—contacting lots of people every day, such as neighbors and ward members, telling them of the specific job you’re looking for and asking if they know of such an open job or if they know someone who might know of such an open job. Be sure to give

Plan for and practice answering the questions you might be asked in a job interview.

your contact information to all of these people as you network daily.

Step 6. Learn to interview well before sending your résumés to employers.

Before you begin to send your finely tuned résumés to prospective employers, you must first learn to interview well. Far too many people begin sending out résumés as quickly as they can, before they're prepared to interview well. The problem with this is that some of these job seekers may get invited right away for an interview. These candidates get excited, go to the interview before preparing adequately for it, don't interview well, and therefore don't get the job. Once you've done this, you can't go back to that company or interviewer and ask for another interview, saying you've now learned how to answer the questions correctly!

How you answer every question in the interview is critical to your success in getting the job you want. Although you must always be fully honest, there are still right and wrong ways to answer each question in an interview. You'll be asked questions like these:

- What are your strengths and your weaknesses?
- What problem did you have in a former job that you would now handle differently?
- What are your salary requirements?
- What would you like to be doing in five years?

As a candidate, the answer you give to every question you're asked must be anticipated and planned out ahead of time. Even one bad answer may cost you the job. Focus your answers on short, one- to two-minute examples that show that your background, skills, and accomplishments do fit their job description. Research the organization before the first interview so you can tailor your responses to their needs.



At the end of most interviews, you will have the opportunity to ask the employer a few questions. Your very best question to ask is about the open job. "What needs to be accomplished or changed in this job?" This will help you in future interviews if you're asked to come back. You can generally save your questions about the organization's goals, work culture, salary (unless you are asked about it), work hours, and benefits for future interviews.

You now have the six steps to getting the job you want. You can't be temporally self-reliant if you need a job and don't have one. If you need employment, a better job, or know someone who does, please use or share these powerful job search tools. They work! May the Lord bless you in your efforts to get the job you want. ■

The author now lives in Utah, USA.

CHURCH RESOURCES TO HELP YOUR JOB SEARCH

Consider joining your ward or stake's "Find a Better Job" self-reliance course. Ask your bishop or branch president if your ward or branch has a self-reliance or employment specialist.

Visit [ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/719](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/719) to find videos on interviewing, networking, résumé writing, and more.



THE GLORIOUS OPPORTUNITY FOR WORK

"Work is an antidote for anxiety, an ointment for

sorrow, and a doorway to possibility. Whatever our circumstances in life, . . . let us do the best we can and cultivate a reputation for excellence in all that we do. Let us set our minds and bodies to the glorious opportunity for work that each new day presents."

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Two Principles for Any Economy," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2009, 56.



PHOTOGRAPH OF SELF-RELIANCE CLASS BY CELIA JEFFERY