

Be Employee of the Month Every Month by Not Repeating the Job Search Process Every Few Months

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The job seeker or employee with a disability is in a unique situation. The unique situation is that the determination that proffers (workplace) empowerment is pitted against the angst of feeling as though the battle for the job offer is in proving that you are 20 times more qualified than the traditionally-abled competition. *Ability Focused Staffing* intends you be the best employee, based on your own merits and achievement of excellence by being the most qualified and prepared candidate because nothing has a more positive impact on business than its personnel. As a job seeker, and a potential catalyst for this company to which you are applying, you need to be the most qualified candidate. To be such, you can train on the hard skills, and improve on the soft skills, and commit to a dedicated, time-consuming job search that will result in a sustainable, best-fit job.

Job seekers (moreover, job seekers with disabilities) must stop applying simply to get a job, just as hiring managers and businesses need to stop hiring simply to fill a position. Knowing that you are armed with the same skills and qualifications as the competition will subsequently arm you with the confidence and erudition to be more selective about the positions for which you apply. You want the job that is offers stability as well as sustainability so that you will be Employee of the Month Every Month, not repeating the job search process every few months.

Goal-setting key to your job search. Make a list and prioritize your goals. Your goals might include a specific or desired hourly wage or salary, a particular company or industry, the size of company, location, schedule, hours, benefits, transportation options specific to that job, employment model (competitive, supported, customized, or self-employment), work environment, or alignment with interests. By using this goals-oriented model for making your list, you will understand that your dream job is at the intersection of your strengths (what you are good at), your interests (what you like to do), and job market (what jobs are available in the job market). Sometimes we need to realize that what we are good at is not always something we can do as paid employment, or there may not be a job available that matches our top interests. That is absolutely ok!

Now that you have some direction in which your job search is headed, finding available positions is the next step. Utilize every resource for discovering those available positions; don't expect or wait for your dream to send you an invitation to apply. Online job boards such as GettingHired.com or Indeed.com, company websites, community bulletin boards, friends, neighbors, relatives, the pastor, community outreach and job readiness programs, college career services departments (if you are a post-secondary student). It is estimated that 80% of available positions are not advertised. Therefore, seizing upon the "who you know" opportunities may benefit your job search. "Many organizations no longer deem it acceptable to simply post an

advertisement for an open position and cross their fingers, hoping that it will attract a well-qualified pool of applicants that reflects wide-ranging diversity.”¹ Employers are using the same strategies that the job seekers use—online job boards, company websites, community bulletin boards, friends, neighbors, relatives, the pastor, community outreach and job readiness programs, college career services departments to name a few.

Don’t discount sending a tailored cover letter and resume to a company in which you have interest expounding your qualifications and why you are drawn to that firm. This is definitely an A-Player move showing initiative and interest through strong communication, relevance, confidence, self-awareness, and motivation.

Just as hiring is a numbers game for businesses and hiring managers, the job search is a numbers game for people seeking meaningful employment. The more opportunities sought, the more likely it is that the right job will be found for sustainable, competitive employment. Apply for as many jobs that fit most of your goals criteria. Don’t send a few applications and cross your fingers. Securing a sustainable job with a living wage takes time and effort.

¹ Caren Goldberg, Ph.D., “Recruiting and Retaining a more Diverse Workforce”
https://www.shrm.org/external/SHRMenterprise/SHRMEnterprise_WhitePaper.pdf