

6 simple ways to stand out to employers when you're job hunting

Making a memorable impression on employers can have a huge payoff: it can help you land the job you want.

The job market has plenty of opportunities right now, with many employers actively searching for the best candidates. So, it's important that you're ready to stand out to these employers and demonstrate why you're the right person for the job.

Here's how to approach your resumé and interview in a way that'll help you differentiate yourself from the competition and boost your chances of success.

1. **Be clear about what you're looking for**

Show that you're clear about what you want in the next step in your career, or in your next role — and talk about how this particular role matches that.

Being able to succinctly explain why the opportunity appeals to you will help you stand out to employers. Highlight what attracts you to the role (such as the skills you want to use, or new areas you want to learn) and the organisation (like the values, culture or brand).

2. **Give examples of your relevant skills and experience**

Make sure your resumé and cover letter detail your relevant experience. Highlight skills that clearly match the key selection criteria in the job ad. This can be the difference between your application making it through to the next stage or not.

Many employers use an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) to scan resúmes for keywords like key skills, qualifications and experience that are listed in the job ad. "If you don't include them, your resumé might be screened out by the 'bot' before it even makes it in front of the eyes of a recruiter," says Leah Lambart, a Career Coach at [Relaunch Me](#).

And even when your application makes it through to a human, the hiring manager or recruiter reading it will quickly search for specific skills and experience that match the job requirements.

To make sure your relevant skills and experience get noticed, Lambart recommends including a 'key skills' section on the first page of your resumé. "Ensure your skills are written in a succinct and professional manner, and describe how you have used that skill in your current or previous roles."

There are many ways to [speak confidently about your skills in an interview](#) setting as well.

3. **Offer referrals from within the organisation**

Networks can be a huge help when you're job hunting, with 67% of hirers saying they'd be more likely to hire a person who's been referred by their professional or personal network.

"There is always some element of risk when hiring a new person," Lambart says. "One way candidates can reassure potential employers that they are making the right decision is to ask an internal contact to put in a good word for them during the recruitment process."

While it's important to [avoid cringeworthy networking moves](#), it can be useful to find out if you know anyone who's already working for the business or organisation. It might be a personal or professional contact, but ideally someone who can vouch for your reputation or ability to perform the role.

4. **Ask good questions in the interview**

Use the interview to [ask your own questions](#) about the culture of the organisation, who you'll be working with and what an average day looks like. This not only helps your decision-making — it also signals to the employer that you're genuinely interested in the role and keen to work out if you're a good fit.

Lambart suggests preparing three or four open-ended questions before an interview.

"Great questions will get the employer talking more about the role, the team, the culture of the organisation or how they prefer to work," she says. "Questions could also be asked about key challenges or priorities that you might face."

5. **Show what you know about the organisation**

While it's good to ask questions, steer clear of very basic or obvious questions with answers that are easily found on the company's website.

Instead, Lambart recommends doing your research before writing your application and going to an interview. Focus on showing you understand the size of the organisation, their products or services, key competitors and reputation in the market.

"An employer is going to be much more impressed when meeting a job seeker who has spent some time researching the organisation," she says.

6. **Master your interview technique**

Your interviewer might ask you questions known as ‘competency-based’ or ‘[behavioural interview questions](#)’. While they might sound complex, these are really just questions designed to find out about your skills, by asking you to give examples of how you’ve used them.

“For example, if teamwork is a really important skillset, you may be asked, ‘Tell us about a time when you made a positive contribution to a team’ or ‘Tell us about a time when you helped a colleague’,” says Lambart.

“To be successful in answering behavioural questions it is really important that you structure your responses using what is known as the ‘STAR’ method. This is effectively just providing a structure to your story much like we were taught at school to write an essay with the structure of an Introduction, Body and Conclusion.”

“The acronym STAR stands for Situation, Task, Action and Result. Set the scene and describe the challenge you were faced with (situation), explain briefly what you needed to do to overcome this challenge (task), explain how you tackled the problem (actions) and finally, summarise the outcome (result).”

Standing out to employers when you’re job hunting takes some planning and research, but this effort can be well worth it. By showing that you’re interested in the role, have taken the time to understand the organisation and have relevant skills and experience, you’ll have a greater chance of getting noticed — and landing the job.

Read more:

- [Job ended badly? Here's how to explain it](#)
- [5 simple ways to start networking and why you should](#)
- [How to create a transferable skills-based resume](#)

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