Job Seeking Etiquette

One of the things many job seekers find daunting through the process of finding a new role is appropriate etiquette. Especially those who have not had to look for a new position for quite some time find this particularly nerve racking. As with most things, the increased reliance in technology in the recruitment process has meant that the way in which employers and agents operate, and their general expectations have changed.

When looking for a new role, or changing careers all together, you want to give yourself the best possible chance of success, and often it is these 'little' things that make the biggest difference. This is particularly true in the highly competitive job markets, where there are many candidates all pitching for the same role. In these situations poor etiquette can quite literally cost you the role.

Here are some of my top tips for appropriate job seeking etiquette to maximise your success!

Keep track of your applications and know which role you are applying for with which company. Of course when you are looking for work you may be applying for many roles at once, but when an employer calls you about your application, and you don't know which role they are talking about, it leaves the impression that you are not targeting roles which you are truly interested in, and just applying for anything you see.

Be Contactable and Professional if you want your application to stand out then you need to treat the entire process with professionalism. Imagine you are one of 100+ applicants for a role, and the employer tries to call you to coordinate an interview, but there is no voicemail for them to leave a message on, or there is a message bank which might be fun and frivolous, but is less than professional? What do you think would happen next? The employer in this case will not be trying to call you back insistently, they will move on and call the other applicants, meaning you may just miss out on the dream role.

Don't waste others time this is of great importance because of the lasting memory it leaves with some employers, and the time poor nature of many managers in the current workplace. What I mean by this is:
- Don't apply for roles which you have no intention of accepting, just to gain experience at interviews, as an effort to get in front of someone or as a tool to 'negotiate' with your existing employer
- Don't expect a call back after business hours, just because it's hard for you to talk. When an employer is looking at dozens, or possibly hundreds of applicants for a position, why should they stay back at work an hour after they usually finish just to speak to you at a time which is more convenient for you?
- If, after an initial interview, you have definitively decided that you are not interested in the role, graciously withdraw your application thanking the employer for their time to date. Whilst they may be disappointed, they will be much more upset if they go to the effort of selecting you as their preferred applicant and start looking at an offer for you, having dismissed other applicants
- Whilst arranging interviews when you are currently employed can be very tricky business, try to be accommodating to the employers schedule. Being insistent on an interview time which is inconvenient to the employer leaves the impression that you are less than flexible and sometimes demanding – is that the impression you want to leave?

- Don't be late to an interview – ever. 5-10 minutes early is perfect. If you have an emergency and will be late or unable to make it, call the employer ASAP, explain your situation, apologise, and see if the appointment can be re scheduled.

Remember common courtesy sounds simple, but it can go a long way. It never ceases to amaze me how the simple things can go missing with some people when they are job seeking. Remember to thank the employer for their time, respond to their calls, e mails and questions promptly and treat them with the level of respect they deserve. Turn off your mobile phone, don't even leave it on vibrate, in an interview situation you can still hear it!

Appropriate Follow Up - Follow up is great, it shows your initiative and enthusiasm, but 'hounding' an employer and failing to listen to the information they provide about the expected timeframes for further contact and progression can leave a less than favourable impression in the employers mind about you. Generally speaking, if you haven't heard back on an application within 1-2 weeks, certainly follow up. If you have been given a timeframe, and have not heard back by this date, follow up. After an interview it is definitely a great idea to pop the employer a quick e mail thanking them for their time, and relaying your interest in the opportunity.

Whilst these all may seem like the smallest things – it really can make a huge difference on the impression you leave in the employers' mind!