

CareerTips

My New Golden Opportunities

by Melissa Woodacre

For the past 15 years of my life all I've ever known is school. I've taken countless tests, made remarkable memories and even a few mistakes. All the while I was told that my main "job" was to get good grades and to graduate from college. Now I'm faced with the task of securing and pursuing an actual career instead of an A on a paper or a job at the local coffee shop.

I've found this task more difficult than I imagined. Not only am I emerging from college into one of the worst job markets in decades, but I'm now faced with an even greater challenge: indecision and inexperience.

My plan was fool-proof; I'd just graduate from college, get a real job, make money and then coast along the rest of my life riding on the coattails of my college degree. I was soon to realize that this mentality wasn't going to get me far.

This past summer I interned at Golden Career Strategies where as a company and as a team we help individuals transition from one career to another through coaching, consulting and assessments. While I was there I had the opportunity to hear about the real job market from experienced veterans and even those who were suffering the windfalls of the upturned economy.

I was also able to go through the program myself and as I began working with Myles, I quickly found that I needed to get over a few hang-ups and just go after opportunities full force. Though I know little to nothing about sports I've grown to understand what Myles means when he talks about a "full court press." Like the basketball players on the court I want to use all of my manpower, resources, intellect and connections to wear down any obstacles in my path.

These obstacles included a fear of networking. I can get up on stage in front of hundreds and not bat an eyelash, but when it came to unscripted, real-world conversation it was different. I wasn't competing for a trophy, but rather trying to win and build a relationship.

Before I started my internship I had the hope of never having to go out networking and of landing a job from my credentials alone. Now I can't seem to remember why I was so scared.

People are people, whether they're in a business suit or not. When you network and build your base of people you're in a much better position to "coast" through life, your career, and your career transitions than you were previously.

I'm still not certain what I'll do with my life, but at least now I know what I need to get myself started. And because I took this internship, I now know what my interests are and what I need to improve upon. Myles and the team here at Golden Career Strategies have helped me become much more optimistic about my future. I know I'll have more than just a "job", I'll have a career.

Five Job Search Mistakes You Can't Afford to Make

by Melissa Woodacre

In this hard-hitting, fast-paced job market, Recruiters and Human Resource Professionals spend about five to ten seconds looking at each résumé. These professionals are trained to quickly sort through the stack of applications and résumés looking to send only a few to their superiors.

Everyone makes mistakes, but there are five résumé and job search errors that could be fatal, especially in this saturated market.

1. Your Cover Letter was too generic.

Cover letters borrowed straight from a book or from an Internet site make you seem unoriginal, especially because a thousand other people probably found the same guide. Another thing to avoid is making your cover letter an exact repeat of your résumé. You'll want to create a professional cover letter without sounding pompous or self-absorbed and the best way to do that is to seek the help of professionals, like those at Golden Career Strategies (GCS).

2. Your Résumé may be full of red flags.



Without the help of a trained professional, you may be including several red flags within your résumé. For instance, if you have too many jobs in a short time you can appear unreliable or an unstable candidate. Conversely, if you have only a few jobs within a long timeframe you may be seen as inflexible to change. A good résumé coach can help you showcase your talents and avoid these and other potential "red flags."

3. There are no numbers in your résumé.

When writing your résumé, try to consider the scope of your accomplishments. Ask yourself questions like: how many, how much and how often? Recruiters, HR Professionals and the entire business world revolves around numbers; it's all about the bottom line. Luckily for you, your résumé can be reworked to include quantifiable achievements which signal to the company that you are good at what you do. The phrase "reduced business costs" doesn't mean much, but "reduced business costs by 50%" or "reduced business costs by \$3,000" does.

4. Your résumé indicates you are not a good "cultural fit."

Your résumé can reveal more about you than you know, so it's imperative that you research the company ahead of time and try to tailor your résumé to that company. Your personal information, extracurricular activities and phrasing can indicate that you may not fit in at the workplace. And while

you don't want to end up in an environment that doesn't work for you, you also do not want to be kept out of an interview just because a gate keeper made the decision for you. A well-written résumé will get you through the door and into the interview room where you can decide for yourself.

5. The Recruiter's first motivation is earning his or her paycheck.

Recruiters and HR Professionals have a heart (trust us, we checked) it's just that their main focus is keeping their own job and their own paycheck. And their job is to provide for their clients the best candidate that matches the job description. Don't depend on them to recognize that you fit the bill. You'll need to prominently and effectively showcase the skills that he or she is looking for and you can do this in your résumé and in your interviews.



Many recruiters and HR Professionals would love to have the time to individually help each job applicant, but there just aren't enough hours in the day. So, sometimes an even better approach would be to simply skip the recruiter or HR Professional altogether by utilizing your network. That way you can fully represent all of your great qualities, even those that can't be put onto paper or in a résumé.

"Believe in yourself! Have faith in your abilities! Without a humble but reasonable confidence in your own powers you cannot be successful or happy."

-Norman Vincent Peale