

John Ellis, Ellis Employment

Seeking employment is among the hardest tasks faced by any person at the best of times due to the difficulty associated with selling yourself. The task is made more difficult by the trauma of unemployment. People seeking employment should avoid a panicked reaction that results in sending out a badly written CV using a scattergun approach. So spend time creating a curriculum vitae that will make a good impression.

Agencies should offer a confidential service to job seekers and be mindful of the consequences of placing a candidate on a wrong career path. A candidate's career can be likely to be destroyed by an unscrupulous agent blasting their CV to employers in order to get commission for themselves.

Deirdre Coghlan-Murray, Clark Recruitment

We encourage candidates to be flexible regarding their expectations both geographically and financially and not to restrict their search too much. However we also advise candidates to ensure they accept a permanent role because they believe it is the right role for them and not just because it is a job. We run an outplacement program where we advise candidates on CV preparation, interviewing skills and steps to take when looking for a new role.

Ann O'Mahony, Premier Group

Select a recruitment agency which is a specialist in your area. Quality consultants will work proactively on your behalf and will invest time to ensure every opportunity is capitalised on, from interview preparation to industry/company knowledge. Dissect your CV incorporating as many duties as possible that are transferable into different sectors.

Provide written references, not just referee details, with your

CV and attend as many interviews as possible. Resist the temptation to register with too many agencies, thereby keeping control on where your CV is being sent. A reputable agency will never send your CV to a company without your permission.

Damien Kehir, Eden Recruitment

Don't panic is the first thing. Strong candidates who are made redundant are tending to get replacement positions and there is still a lot of recruitment happening in the market. Candidates should prepare meticulously for each interview.

Colm Lynch, Berkley Recruitment

Seeking a new job starts with meeting a recruitment consultant. Prior to this initial meeting, candidates should clarify in their own minds:

- which direct responsibilities do you enjoy the most within your current or previous roles?
- what is your unique selling point i.e. what can you bring to a business which no-one else can?
- what are your short-term and long-term objectives with regards your career?

Candidates must impress upon an employer that they are thinking long-term and any briefing prior to job applications should be a collaborative process. Bring ideas to the table and talk to your consultant about them.

The consultant should put forward a project plan which contains prospective organisations to target.

Preparation is key. If you are targeting roles within industries which are familiar to you, don't take anything for granted. If your efforts are focused on changing career path, great care is needed to make sure your transferable skills are highlighted. Too many job seekers send out the same CV to employers in different industries.

Let's say you work in financial sales and you want to become a product sales specialist within a medical sales function. The key is to understand what exactly you are applying for. Find out about the company, look through their product list, imagine yourself selling them. What would you consider to be the USP of those products? How would you go about building contact lists?

As regards job interviews, prepare with two focus points in mind:

- what are your key selling points regarding your career strengths?
- how do they tie into the role you are applying for?

Never presume that the interviewer will see how your past experience will be of benefit to the vacancy. You have to demonstrate that you are clearly the best by 'crossing the bridge' and explaining your key competencies that are relevant to the role, with examples to prove your point.

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