

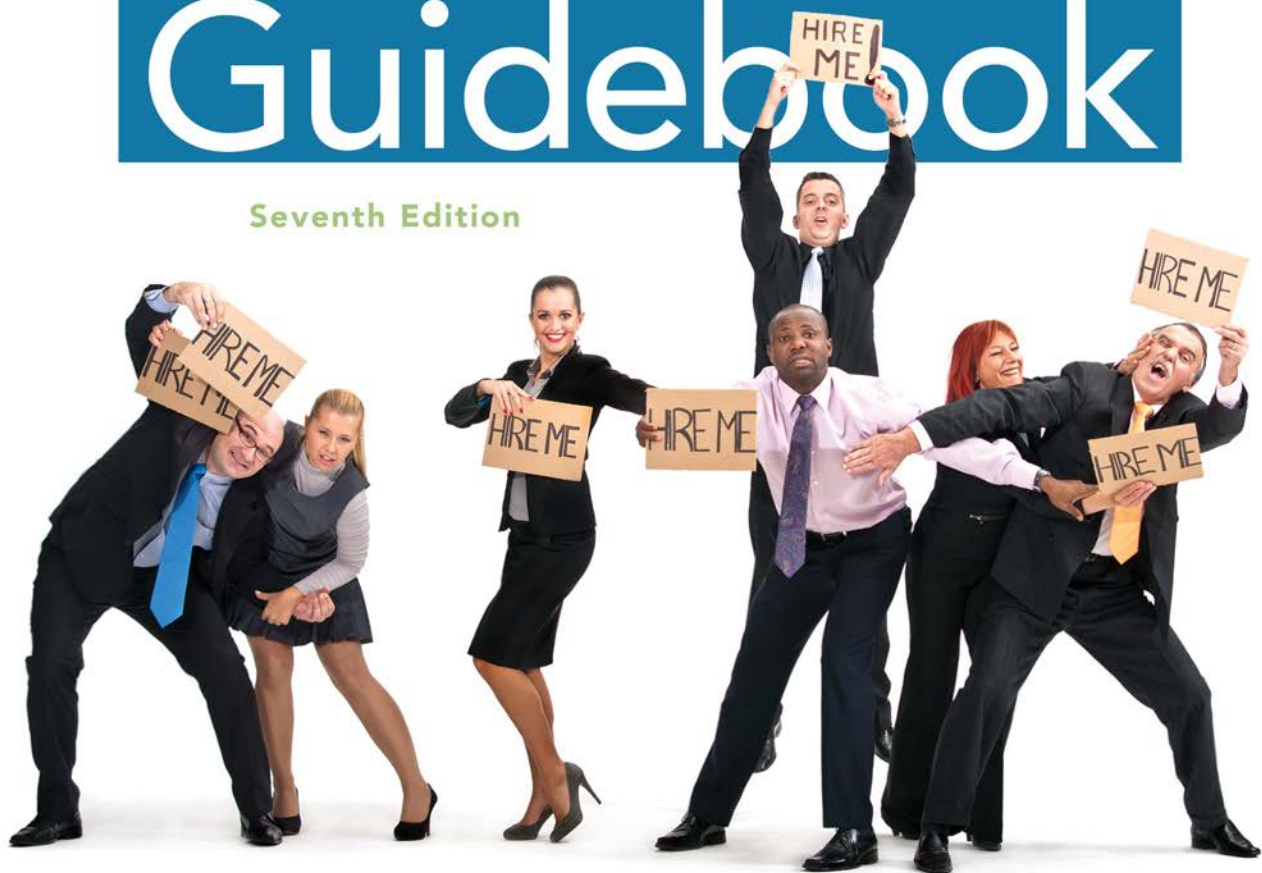
The

Ultimate

Job Hunter's

Guidebook

Seventh Edition

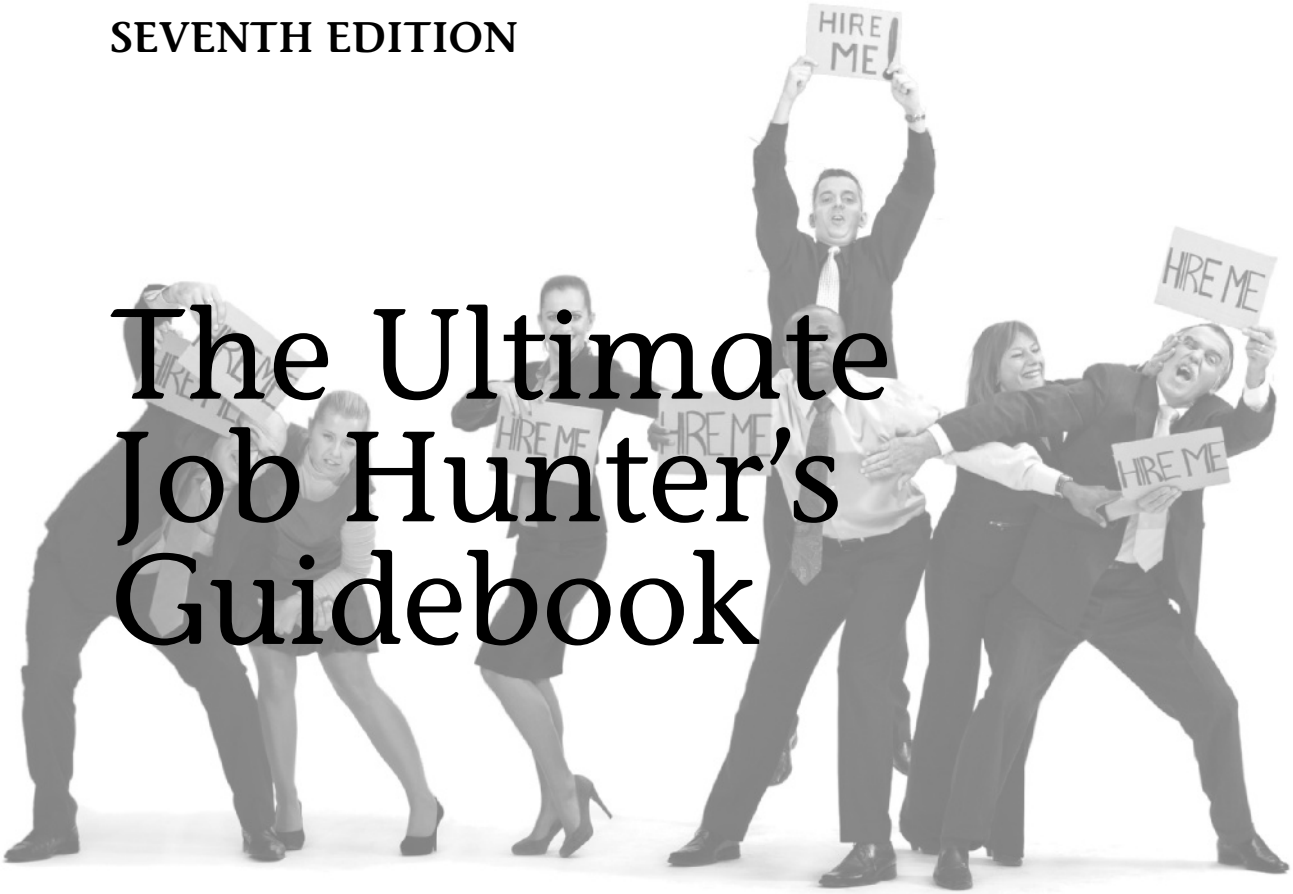


Susan D. Greene

Melanie C. L. Martel

SEVENTH EDITION

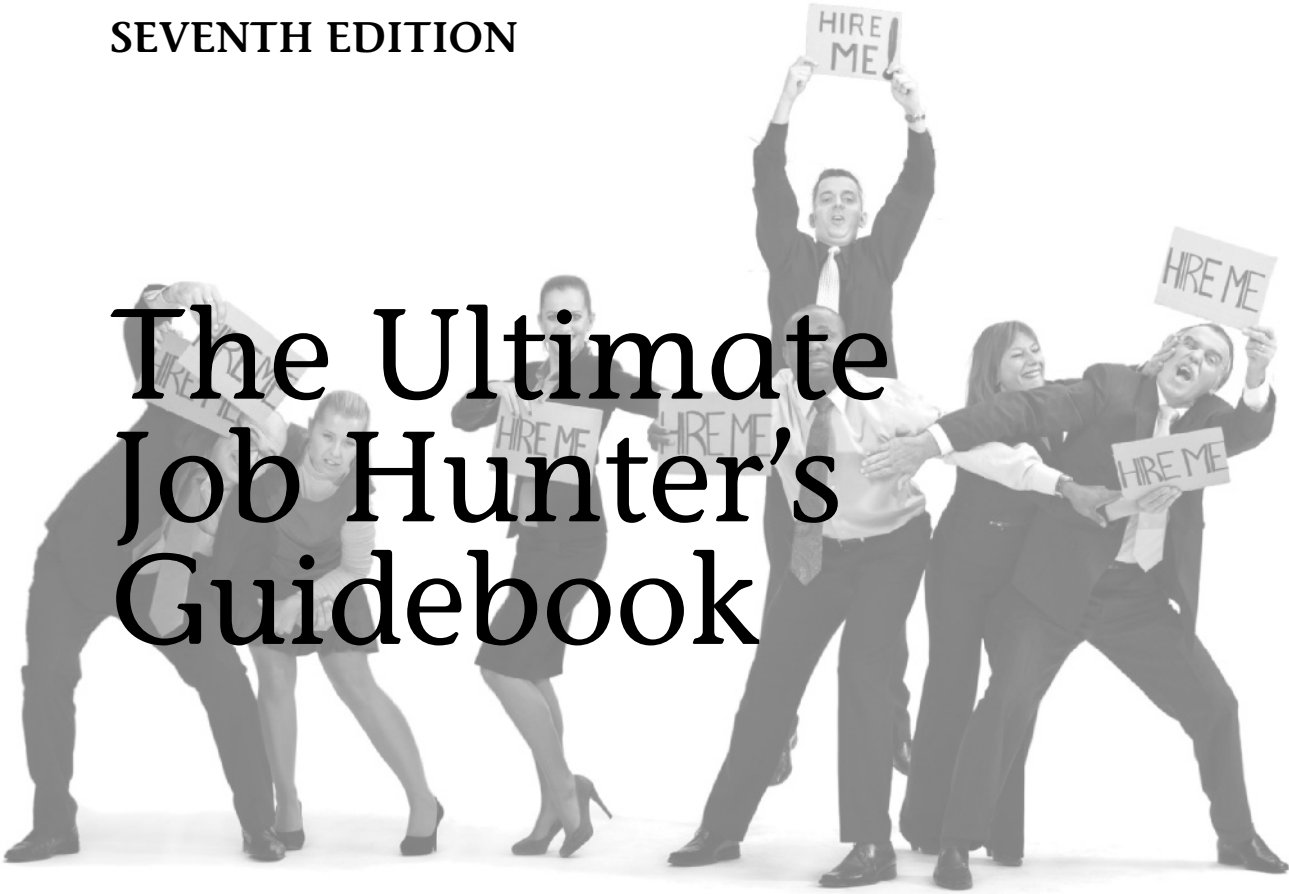
# The Ultimate Job Hunter's Guidebook





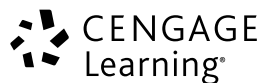
SEVENTH EDITION

# The Ultimate Job Hunter's Guidebook



**Susan D. Greene**

**Melanie C. L. Martel**



Australia • Brazil • Japan • Korea • Mexico • Singapore • Spain • United Kingdom • United States

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**The Ultimate Job Hunter's Guidebook,  
Seventh Edition**

Susan D. Greene, Melanie C. L. Martel

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# PREFACE

Here are the facts:

1. Having a college degree is not enough to guarantee you a job.
2. Most jobs are found via networking, not through answering ads or posting your résumé on a job board.
3. The majority of companies today use some form of social media to recruit and research their candidates. So you'd better use it too!
4. Meeting with an employer if you haven't first researched the company is a sure-fire way to blow the interview.
5. In a tough economy, you may need to get out of your comfort zone and think creatively to find employment in your field.

For all the above reasons, job hunting can be a daunting task. In fact, for many students, just the thought of beginning the job search process can cause more butterflies in the stomach than final exams.

*The Ultimate Job Hunter's Guidebook, Seventh Edition*, demystifies the job hunt and provides specific, easy-to-implement and creative strategies for achieving a successful outcome. Broken into its simplest parts and tackled methodically, a job search can be a rewarding pursuit that helps the individual grow personally and professionally.

## Organization of This Book

A theme that weaves its way through each chapter of this book is that job hunting should be looked upon as a marathon, not a sprint. Whether in job hunting or marathon running, success requires hard work over time, steadfast dedication, and a never-give-up attitude. In that light, *The Ultimate Job Hunter's Guidebook* breaks the job search process into four basic parts.

The first, *Develop Your Strategy*, encourages job hunters to take time to organize their search. They must have an understanding of their strengths and the direction they plan to take in launching their career.

The next section, *Create Your Job Hunting Tools*, helps arm the job seeker with a powerful job hunting arsenal, including a strong résumé, compelling cover letters, persuasive letters of recommendation, and a personal website, portfolio, or blog.



*Search for Employers* follows, providing information on the best ways to be resourceful in unearthing all available positions. It includes many specific tactics that incorporate social media. It also covers the exploration of career alternatives and nontraditional avenues for finding satisfying employment.

Finally, Part Four, *Land the Job*, focuses on the crucial steps of applying and interviewing for the job. It concludes with guidance on evaluating job offers and learning a new position. After all, once you get a job, succeeding at it is just as important.

## A Practical Approach to Job Hunting

*The Ultimate Job Hunter's Guidebook* focuses on practical application of job hunting skills. It offers straightforward advice in an easy-to-follow style. There are no long-winded theories or philosophical discussions. Instead, you'll find step-by-step instructions for how to proceed through each stage of the search.

As in previous editions, the text includes many actual samples of job hunting tools, such as résumés and cover letters from a wide variety of career fields. Students can use these examples as virtual templates, substituting their own information into the established format.

The text also offers many hands-on activities and thought-provoking questions for the job hunter to consider either alone or in group discussions. And throughout each chapter is heavy emphasis on employing the latest technologies and online tools at every phase of the job hunt.

## New Features

This seventh edition of *The Ultimate Job Hunter's Guidebook* has many new features to help students embrace the material:

- **Get Motivated!**—Every chapter begins with words of wisdom meant to provide inspiration and encourage a positive attitude.
- **Assess Your Knowledge**—Students are asked to take a brief quiz before diving into the meat of each chapter.
- **Chapter Preview**—These bullets prepare the reader for the 4 to 6 most important topics to be examined in the chapter.
- **Key Takeaway**—An explanation of real-life relevance helps the job seeker understand how and why the information in the chapter will be useful in the job hunt.
- **Frequently Asked Questions**—In each chapter one main subject has been chosen for elaboration in a question/answer format.
- **Case Studies in Success**—Often the greatest education comes from seeing how others in similar situations have succeeded.

- **Case Study Analysis**—Students are asked to determine what strategies were applied by the job hunters featured and what can be learned from their experiences.
- **Problem Solving**—Provided with a specific scenario, the reader must use techniques learned in the chapter to make practical recommendations.

Students will find these special features extremely relevant as they embark on their new career and in years to come as they progress in their chosen profession.

## Companion Website

Because we believe that one of the keys to a successful job hunt is to gather as much information as possible, we've created a comprehensive website as a companion tool for *The Ultimate Job Hunter's Guidebook, Seventh Edition*. The website expands on many of the subjects covered in the text to enhance teaching and learning. To aid in classroom lectures, downloadable PowerPoint slides and discussion questions are available on the Instructor website.

The Student website offers chapter summaries and self-tests to deepen understanding of the *Guidebook's* material as well as direct links to many other useful career websites. You can visit the companion website for the text at [www.cengagebrain.com](http://www.cengagebrain.com).

*Susan D. Greene*  
*Melanie C. L. Martel*

# Part One

## Develop Your Strategy

- Chapter 1** Planning Your Job Search
- Chapter 2** Conducting a Self-Assessment
- Chapter 3** Researching Careers

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Chapter **1**

# Planning Your Job Search



Catherine Lane/E+/Getty Images

## Get **Motivated!**

*Let our advance worrying become  
advance thinking and planning.*

—Winston Churchill

## Assess Your Knowledge

### Short Answers

1. What do you think are the first three steps of the job hunt?

---

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2. What tools do you think a job hunter needs?

---

---

3. What role do social networking sites play in the job hunt?

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## Chapter Preview

In this chapter, you'll learn to:

- Identify the steps in the job hunting process.
- Begin to create a strategic plan for successful employment.

## Key Takeaway

A job hunter with an overview of the big picture of the job hunt always knows what action item to tackle next. Approaching the job hunt as a step-by-step process makes it more successful and less stressful.

# Job Search Step One: Develop Your Strategy

## Planning Your Job Search

The first few steps of the job hunt focus on choosing a direction, setting goals, and deciding on a strategy for reaching those goals. Although some new job hunters may be eager to get started, careful planning at the outset will ensure better results. The sections that follow outline these preliminary measures in detail and point to the chapters that offer even further explanation and clarification.

## Conducting a Self-Assessment (see Chapter 2)

The first step in job hunting is to find out about yourself and your desires. Decide what you'd really like to do. What are your skills and capabilities? What are your values and interests? A little soul-searching at the start of your job hunt can pay big dividends.

If you're still unsure of a career direction after your first attempts at self-assessment, explore the many career self-assessment tools that are available to you, and, if necessary, consider enlisting the help of a career professional from your community or your college. After you've learned about yourself, you'll be better able to determine the type of employment you're seeking.

When you've a sense of your own strengths and skills and what kind of work you'd like to do, begin focusing on what you'd like in an employer. How large a company would you like to work for? What geographic area would be best? What work environment do you envision?

Begin the search by compiling a Top Ten List of job possibilities and then prepare for the next step: targeting and strategizing your job hunt.

## Researching Careers (see Chapter 3)

Now that you've developed a list of potential careers that interest you, the next step is to research those possibilities to narrow the list. Determine what you need to know about your potential career and then develop a list of research questions. Search online and perhaps at your library to find the answers to your questions.

Research different fields to find a career that matches your skills and your desires. Visit your college's career planning and placement office, gather facts and statistics about various careers online, and conduct informational interviews and job shadow people whose careers are potential options for you. If you're still unsure,

continue to expand your base of information. Use all the resources available to you to gather as much information as possible about different careers. Choose one or two careers to start your research, and take some pressure off yourself by remembering that very few people stay in the same career over their lifetime. The job you're seeking now is only the first step in a series of career moves.

Once you've determined a career direction, take some time to create a job hunting headquarters and then map out a plan. Realize that your job hunt will progress more smoothly if you're organized. Assemble your organizational tools, such as to-do lists and spreadsheets, so you can locate and use as many job hunting documents as you need. Have a plan to maintain a positive attitude and avoid job hunting burnout.

Evaluate how you want to manage your time, noting the time management and organizational habits of people you consider to be successful. Decide what job hunting strategies will yield the biggest results.

Finally, be sure to take care of your physical and emotional well-being. Job hunting can be stressful, and in order to reach your goals, you must learn to make your stress work for you.

## Job Search Step Two: Create Your Job Hunting Tools

The next phase of the job hunt involves composing and finding all the documents you'll need to best present yourself to potential employers. Having a well-prepared

**Before beginning the job hunting process, take time to get organized. Creating a plan will give your search direction and help you avoid feeling overwhelmed.**

Laflor/Vetta/Getty Images



résumé and some glowing letters of recommendation as well as a few samples of your work will give you a sense of confidence before you begin interviewing.

## **Preparing Your Résumé (see Chapter 4)**

If you were building a home, you'd use the very best tools available to you so the process would be easier and the outcome would be better. Similarly, when you build your career, it is important to use quality tools. Examine all the résumés you can find. Rely on your best judgment, but take into account the advice of those who work in your desired field. Make decisions about which format, font, and wording you prefer. Write a few rough drafts, and get feedback from trusted friends and professionals. A neat, well-written, and error-free résumé will not only give you confidence throughout your job search but also get you in the door and provide you with the opportunity to sell yourself at the job interview. You may find it beneficial to develop several versions of your résumé tailored to the various jobs you'd consider.

## **Writing Cover Letters (see Chapter 5)**

You've all your tools—self-assessment, résumé, and research—and now you're ready to use them. Write a cover letter (also called a letter of application) to each employer with your résumé. Your cover letter will give you the chance to state which position you're applying for, mention your strong points, and ask for an interview. You'll probably need to develop several versions and review your drafts with others to double-check your wording and format. Be sure to address your cover letter to a specific person whenever possible. Remember that the best person to send your cover letter to is the person who would be your immediate supervisor, not the human resources department.

## **Obtaining References (see Chapter 6)**

What supporting documents can you supply that will support your assertion that you're a talented individual who is ready and able to work?

The most common supporting documents—letters of reference—can be valuable in convincing an employer to hire you. References serve as third-party endorsements testifying to the quality of your work and character. You can obtain letters of recommendation from previous employers, teachers, or anyone else you've known professionally. It is never too early to start soliciting letters of recommendation. You should also help potential employers to hire you by laying the groundwork for solid telephone references.

## **Building a Portfolio, Website, or Blog (see Chapter 7)**

If possible, also gather samples of relevant work, your writing, any special projects you've completed, awards you've received, or articles written about you or your work. Assemble these documents into a portfolio that you'll present to potential employers at the interview. Creating an e-portfolio for posting on your personal website is another excellent way to present your credentials and skills.

## Job Search Step Three: Search for Employers

At this stage, you've amassed the self-knowledge and the tools so you can confidently present yourself to employers. Now you're ready to focus your search on specific employers and expand your network of contacts.

### Finding Opportunities (see Chapter 8)

Who employs people with your skills? Which companies are best, and which positions within them are likely to fit you best? There are many places where you can look for answers to these questions.

Begin by networking. Your most valuable source of information is other people. Contact everyone you know to let them know about your career goals. Solicit names of others who might be able to help and keep track of all your contacts. Be persistent and thorough. Let everyone you know help with your job search. Ask questions of friends, relatives, and coworkers. See what you can learn from members of your church, health club, social organizations, or professional groups. Person-to-person contact will provide you with current information and the inside scoop on certain companies or careers. Talking with people is a great way to begin establishing your network. It is also valuable preparation for the interview and an increasingly important skill in the workplace.

Next, generate job leads by searching job boards and company websites, finding want ads, and researching companies. Check out manufacturing and industrial directories. Find the appropriate professional journals to see what newspapers and magazines have to say about a particular company or a general career field. Attend job fairs and trade shows. Libraries and college placement offices often have information on local companies and smaller businesses. The local chamber of commerce or professional and business associations can provide you with helpful literature.

All your reading and networking should pay off with a long list of possible employers. Narrow this list to employers that meet the requirements you set in the first phases of your job search. Set aside organizations that are outside your geographical range or do not employ people in the type of position you seek.

Now that you've a strong working list, do a bit more researching of companies online and by writing to or calling potential employers to request any public relations information, sales literature, or annual reports they are willing to send you. Use these materials or your telephone skills to learn the name of the person who makes the hiring decisions at each workplace. This is usually the person who would be your supervisor if you were hired for the job. When possible, avoid sending materials to the human resources office; one of its primary functions is to screen out applicants!

### Using Social Media in Your Job Search (see Chapter 9)

Learn to make social networking work for you during the job hunt. Use LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and other business networking sites to expand your circle of



contacts and get job leads. Integrate social networking with traditional networking, and begin building your personal brand. Just be mindful of your online image; scrutinize your own sites and check mentions of you on others' sites to be sure your professional reputation stays professional.

## **Considering Non-traditional Options (see Chapter 10)**

Unearth and evaluate all the appropriate job possibilities, including positions with the federal, state, and local government or with nonprofit organizations. Seek out smaller businesses or even start your own business. Finally, evaluate whether furthering your education or training would create better opportunities for you.

## **Job Hunting in Tough Times (see Chapter 11)**

Try accessing the job market by using nontraditional methods or by working in a different type of position from the one you originally envisioned. This may be a part-time position or a position remotely related to your main career interest. Explore achieving career success by working as an intern, a freelancer, or a volunteer. Keeping an open mind and a multifaceted approach to the job hunt will increase your chances of finding a truly satisfying career.

# **Job Search Step Four: Land the Job**

You've decided on a career field and located an employer that offers you the best match for your skills, interests, and needs. You've created a résumé that highlights your strengths and written a cover letter that's allowed you to get your foot in the door. You've finally arrived for a face-to-face meeting. Now is the time to make a good impression, present your strengths, and land the job.

## **Filling Out Job Applications (see Chapter 12)**

Some employers may want you to complete a company application form before considering you for a job. This small first step is your initial chance to show the employer the quality of your work. Brush up on the information these forms require so you'll feel comfortable when the time comes to complete one. Be sure you know how to complete hard copy and online applications on job boards, on company websites, or at hiring kiosks.

## **Interviewing (see Chapter 13)**

Once the date has been set for your interview, begin practicing your interviewing techniques. Prepare a list of personal and professional references to bring with you.

Research the company at which you'll be interviewing. Find the company or organization's website, and gather any literature it publishes. Also prepare your own list of questions about the company and the job. The more you know about the company or organization and the position you're interviewing for, the better prepared you'll be.

Arrive for your interview on time and looking your best. Be ready to answer the interviewer's questions intelligently and completely, presenting yourself with poise and confidence. Watch your body language, voice, and mannerisms.

Consider each interview a learning experience, and be prepared to evaluate yourself after each one. Whatever you do, remember that your work is not finished once the interview is over. Think of ways to improve your job hunting skills, and follow up the interview with a thank-you note, e-mail messages, and telephone calls to remind the employer that you're interested and qualified.

Because the costs of hiring and training new employees are so high, employers continually seek ways to weed out poor candidates. Some of the employment tests you may encounter are drug tests, aptitude tests, psychological tests, and medical exams. A prepared job applicant will anticipate this step.

When the preliminary phases of the job search have proved successful, a few long-anticipated steps remain. You'll need to evaluate the possibilities you've worked so hard to create, and after accepting a job, you'll need to be sure that your employment gets off to a strong start—all the while keeping an eye on your plans for the future.

## Evaluating Job Offers (see Chapter 14)

Once you've been offered one or more jobs, your job hunt may be over, but you now face a decision that will have a huge impact on your life. Learn to identify employment scams and how to negotiate salary offers. Then, carefully weigh all your options to make the career choice that is best for you.

## Learning Your New Job (see Chapter 15)

The first few months on the job are often fraught with challenges as you meet new people and begin to learn your specific responsibilities. You may want to adjust your work habits in order to fit in at your workplace. You'll need to hone your skills, manage workplace relationships, take in a tremendous amount of information, and learn about the corporate culture of your new workplace.

Review the four major steps of the job hunt outlined in this chapter and the many smaller steps described in each of the following chapters. Some of the steps may be new to you, but there may be others that you've already accomplished. For example, you may have a good idea of the type of job you'd like, although you may not have the tools you need to get it. Or you may have developed a draft of your résumé for a job search in the past, but you're no longer certain of what career path to take. No matter what stage you find yourself in, an exploration of the steps explained in the following chapter, "Conducting a Self-Assessment," followed up by a special focus on the areas most in need of improvement—will make your job hunt a more efficient, less anxious, and more rewarding experience.

**EXERCISE****Where Do You Stand?**

In the blank spaces to the left below, indicate your own comfort level with each of the following job search steps. Begin by rating each step on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 indicating a very low level of confidence or preparation and 10 indicating a very high level of preparedness.

<i>Rating</i>	<i>Job Search Step</i>	<i>Post-Exploration Rating</i>
_____	<b>1.</b> Conducting a self-assessment	_____
_____	<b>2.</b> Planning and organizing the job hunt	_____
_____	<b>3.</b> Preparing a résumé	_____
_____	<b>4.</b> Writing cover letters	_____
_____	<b>5.</b> Obtaining references	_____
_____	<b>6.</b> Assembling a portfolio	_____
_____	<b>7.</b> Targeting employers	_____
_____	<b>8.</b> Job hunting online	_____
_____	<b>9.</b> Considering all career alternatives	_____
_____	<b>10.</b> Accessing the job market in nontraditional ways	_____
_____	<b>11.</b> Filling out job applications	_____
_____	<b>12.</b> Interviewing	_____
_____	<b>13.</b> Taking employment tests	_____
_____	<b>14.</b> Evaluating job offers	_____
_____	<b>15.</b> Learning the new job	_____

Now circle the three areas that you gave the lowest ratings. Skim the Table of Contents, and list the chapter numbers in this book that address your concerns.

Area 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Area 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Area 3: \_\_\_\_\_

After you've had time to explore your target chapters more deeply, review and renumber each item on the list again—this time using the column of blank spaces at the right. Note your areas of improvement as well as areas that still need more work. Which resources will you seek out or revisit in order to address your lowest-scoring areas?