

Looking for Work & Landing the Job

Eight Steps to Follow and Tips for Every Stage of the Job Search



Looking for a job can be overwhelming. Searching for employment requires patience, work, and motivation from anyone. There are many resources available to help you identify opportunities and move forward on your individual path. The following outlines eight steps to take in searching and applying for jobs. The steps and the specific services listed in these steps are provided in detail on the New Mexico Workforce Connection Online System (JOBS) at www.jobs.state.nm.us. You can also find more information in the New Mexico Career Guide, available online at www.dws.state.nm.us.

STEP 01: CHOOSE A CAREER

The first step to take in your job search is to choose your career and/or occupation. You may think that this is an easy step or one that most people have already taken, but this step can be very difficult for people of all ages and levels of expertise, experience, and education. The New Mexico Career Guide includes in-depth information about career exploration.

STEP 02: FIND THE IDEAL JOB

Once you have a better idea of the occupations you are interested in and that match your experience and training, it's time to start looking for job openings. The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS) has a job search engine that eliminates the need for you to visit every job hunting website out there and allows you to search for jobs all over New Mexico. What may be the best part about the JOBS website is that it "spiders" to almost every other search engine website, including Monster, Indeed, USAJobs, and CareerBuilder. What this means is that you can find job openings from all of these sites in one location. There are many options to set parameters for your job search from location to wage to experience level. Creating an account through the system makes it even easier to track the job openings you're interested in and those for which you've applied. Plus, all of the other tools mentioned in this publication are located on the website for you to utilize throughout your job search process.

STEP 03: PREPARE YOUR RESUME

One-on-one personal interaction with a potential employer is the best bet to making a good impression and receiving a job offer. In today's technology-based world, where it seems like everything is done electronically, one-on-one networking is not as common and is not as open of an avenue for many job seekers. Your first opportunity to sell your abilities, experience, and potential is typically through your resume. This is a tool that you should always have prepared. The key goal of your resume is to motivate an employer to invite you to an interview and, if interviewed, serves as a primary reference point as you discuss, examine, and evaluate your qualifications and skills. While it may be fairly simple to list your previous employment, education, and primary skills, it is not always so easy to phrase and compile this information into a resume that is organized, complete, clear, and accurate, and that highlights your greatest strengths and qualifications in a straightforward and precise way.

STEP 04: WRITE YOUR COVER LETTER

A cover letter should always accompany your resume. It is your opportunity to introduce yourself, express interest in the organization, and explain what you can contribute to the team. It explains why the employer should look at your resume, so it should be eye-catching. Establish a personal connection and allow your personality to shine through the document. Write in short, clear paragraphs and be clear about what you are asking the employer to do as a result of the letter (typically scheduling an interview). The letter should use standard business formatting. The JOBS website provides a Letter Builder tool.

STEP 05: CONTACT YOUR REFERENCES

Almost every job you apply for will require references at some point. Contact your references before giving their information to a potential employer. Check that they are willing and able to discuss all of your capabilities. Do not provide references unless they are requested and provide them on a separate document from your resume. Your references will most likely be contacted directly by phone or email, but recommendation letters can also be provided.

STEP 06: PREPARE FOR THE INTERVIEW

While the purpose of your resume is to get an interview, the purpose of the interview is to get a job offer. Preparing for an interview is incredibly important because if you take the time to thoroughly prepare, the employer will notice. The interview is a key opportunity for you to present yourself as organized, punctual, and professional. You want to be able to discuss your qualifications in more detail and with specific examples based on the information you provided in your cover letter and resume. The interview is also an opportunity for you to ask specific questions about the position and employer to ensure that the opportunity is the right fit for you.

Once you've prepared for the interview, you will hopefully be feeling more comfortable and less anxious. However, even the most prepared people might still feel nervous. Speak with confidence, and remember that the interview is a two-way conversation where both players are asking questions and actively listening.

STEP 07: FOLLOW UP WITH EMPLOYERS

It is very important that you follow up with an employer quickly after an interview, regardless of how you felt the interview went. You should send the employer a follow up letter including ideas that you may have forgotten to discuss and provide information that the employer requested during the interview. Briefly remind the employer of the high-points of the interview, thank the employer for their time and consideration, and invite them to contact you with any questions or to schedule another meeting. The New Mexico Workforce Connection Online System provides a Letter Builder Tool to help you construct a good follow up letter.

STEP 08: NEGOTIATE A JOB OFFER

If all of the above steps lead to a job offer - congratulations! You should carefully consider the offer that is made and really evaluate whether the position meets your own wants and needs. Make sure you know the average wages for the occupation. You can find this information for your local are by using the Career Informer tool on the New Mexico Workforce Connection Online System.

Even if you feel confident that the position is right for you, there is always room to negotiate. Both you and the employer should be willing to find a mutual agreement. Before you being to negotiate, be clear in your mind about your needs and expectations and listen carefully to the employer's responses. You should be able to justify your requirements. If you are not prepared to discuss the fine points of the offer, let the employer know that you will need some time to consider the offer and tell them when you will officially respond.

This information is often asked for during job interviews. Fill it out this form and take it with you for reference.

Driver's License # _____

Social Security # _____

(Be sure to keep this in a secure place and keep your SSN safe.)

Education

School: _____

Address: _____

Major Subjects: _____

Dates: _____

Previous Employment

Employer: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Job Title: _____

Dates: _____

Employer: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Job Title: _____

Dates: _____

References

(Get permission before using names and contact information.)

Name: _____

Relationship: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Relationship: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Other Skills

Example: Computer/Trade, Military Service, etc. _____

INTERVIEW TIPS

Preparation

- Fill out the Pocket Resume to use as a reference during interviews or while filling out applications.
- Learn as much as you can about the company.
- Know what skills are needed for the job you want.
- Evaluate yourself and review your qualifications.
- Be prepared to answer questions.
- Make copies of your resume, cover letter, reference, transcripts, etc., to bring to the interview.

Questions

The employer may ask you:

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your career goals?
- Why do you want to work for us?
- Why should we hire you?
- What are your strengths/weaknesses?

You may want to ask the employer:

- How will I be trained?
- Who will I be working with and what do they do?
- Where will I be working?
- What career opportunities are available?

Interview

Your Appearance:

- Be well groomed — take a shower, wash your hair, shave, brush your teeth, use mouthwash/deodorant, comb your hair, trim and clean your nails.
- Wear clean, pressed, appropriate clothes.
- Evaluate yourself — would you hire someone like you?

Interview:

- Show up on time and alone.
- Have a positive attitude and be polite.
- Answer all questions truthfully and honestly.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Always shake hands before and after the interview.
- Turn off your cell phone before the interview starts.

After the Interview

- Provide any additional material (samples of your work, etc.) as soon as possible.
- Think about how your interview went and what you could improve upon in the future.
- Send a thank-you note to your interviewer(s) within 24 hours.
- Follow-up with a phone call after one week (or after the time-frame given by the interviewer).



NEW MEXICO CAREER GUIDE YOUR RESOURCE FOR SCHOOL AND WORK

The New Mexico Career Guide publication is now available online as an all-in-one job seeker resource at www.dws.state.nm.us, under “Job Seeker.” This publication includes information broken down into five sections:

- Career Planning and Exploration
- Opportunities to Explore and Gain Experience
- Your Educational Opportunities
- The Job Search
- New Mexico School Listings



Download a QR code reader app on your smart phone or tablet to scan the code for more information.