

Be Happy; Do Not Settle for Content with your Career

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I encounter a lot of job seekers who are under-employed or unhappily employed. These job seekers are always able to obtain employment but not the type of employment and/or salary that they desire. These job seekers have experience in a particular capacity and cannot secure a position outside of that capacity. From our conversations, I have discovered that most do not look for a job until they are no longer employed. They also have not taken full advantage of any professional development opportunities offered while working, such as going back to college or participating in a training program to update their skills and/or obtain a license/certification.

In our current competitive job market, employers determine candidates' employability from what the candidate has successfully accomplished recently, specifically in employment, training, school or in a volunteer role. If you are looking for better employment or a career change, consider going to college, enrolling in a training program and/or volunteering. By going to college, training, and/or volunteering, a candidate can leverage the additional skills acquired and experience combined with his/her current experience to secure a better position in the same capacity or a new position in a different capacity. Each of these activities offers the job seeker an opportunity to learn how to bring more to the table when looking to find new opportunities with a current and/or new employer.

I was working one-on-one with someone seeking a career change with 5+ years of retail experience, but the individual wanted to get out of retail into an administrative support role with more stable hours and a better salary. From looking at the career changer's resume, I did not see the type of experience that a hiring manager would find enticing enough to contact for an interview to fill an administrative position. I advised the career changer to enroll in a local college and take computer and business classes as well as volunteer once a week at a local not-for-profit organization; which the career changer did.

In the early part of the following year, I met with the career changer again. The person was a completely different candidate. The business and computer classes infused the business intuition and technical proficiencies that are necessary to be successful in an administrative support role. The volunteer experience at a local not-for-profit allowed the career changer to gain verifiable administrative experience which resulted in credibility as well as provided the career changer an opportunity to build a professional network. The career changer secured an administrative role two months later that offered a desired work environment, stable hours and a 25% salary increase.

The worst time to look for a new or better job is when you are unemployed. It is easier to advance when you are in a stable position. Position yourself to never have to experience long-term unemployment, unhappy employment, low pay and undesirable work conditions by getting an employment opportunity and using other assets such as school, training and volunteering to get a better opportunity. You should be happy and look forward to going to work. Your career path should be clear and highly beneficial. Do not allow your professional career to be depressing and uncertain.