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College Grads: What No One Is Telling You About Getting Hired

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You've recently graduated from college and are still job hunting. That's okay. That mortarboard will give you the edge over your peers who didn't go to college. In fact, the unemployment rate for those with a college degree sits around 2.4%, and it's held steady over the past year. That rate was substantially lower than the jobless rate across the U.S., which is around 4.4% and is at a 10-year low. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), employers expect to hire 5% more new college graduates from the class of 2017 than they hired from last year's class.

That's the good news. Now a word about the competition. U.S. colleges and universities are expected to soon award 1,018,000 associate degrees and 1.9 million bachelor's degrees, according to the National Centre for Education Statistics. There's hordes of grads vying to be hired.

Sadly, many college graduates lack both practical work experience as well as soft skills. These are the crucial people skills you need to land a job, be part of and work on a team as well as navigate the day-to-day rigors of a modern workplace.

Here's some tips on how smart college grads get hired.

Getting your foot in the door

Still sending the same resume en masse to potential employers? Customize it for each job or industry that interests you. Recruiters spend less than five minutes scanning CVs, so in order to stand out, highlight your skills relating to the job vacancy. Would a video resume be a good fit for the industry or sector you're targeting?

Check if your CV trumpets your leadership experience.

That and your major will rank you higher as a job candidate, particularly if a recruiter is deciding between you and another contender. That was the finding from an annual survey by NACE. Employers weren't worried about other attributes such as the school you attended, your volunteer work, fluency in a foreign language or if you'd studied abroad. They will, however, Google you, so ensure your online reputation doesn't tarnish your job prospects.

Boost your opportunity with an internship or two

If you're keen for an internship, you're in luck. U.S. employers expect to hire 3.4% more interns in 2017 than last year. In the past four years they said they expected to maintain or decrease their hiring levels for interns, according to a recently released report from NACE, which actually shows the regions and company types looking to hire. Always look for a paid internship where possible.

Punch above your weight by who you know

Depending who you listen to, up to 85% of jobs are never advertised. Networking – talking to relatives, friends, peers, teachers, businesspeople and even complete strangers – is a key way to sniff out job opportunities, get noticed, be recommended and nab a role. Chat about your job search, listen to the advice you receive and seek introductions to people in your field of interest. Great for practice interviews. Please follow up, thank them and keep in touch to stay on their radar. Who knows, you might even click and find a mentor or sponsor.

You're always networking, according to author Patti Hunt-Dirlam. In her book, *The Power of Everyday Networking*, she talks about seven principles to integrate authentic networking into your daily life. Another way you can do the legwork is with *What Color Is Your Parachute*, the New York Times best seller that's sold more than 10 million copies and hasn't been out of print



since the 1970s. The book inspires you to identify and analyze what you enjoy, your past roles and studies, your network and to then leverage your findings to exponentially expand your job search.

Become an expert

The more you talk with people in your industry, the better versed you'll be on the latest trends and developments. Tapping into industry mags, online news, blogs and podcasts will help set you apart from other candidates and you'll be demonstrating your work ethic – another drawing card.

Don't put all your eggs in one basket

On average, just over half of Americans will work in an industry that is directly related to their college degree. Keep your options open. Perhaps a gap year is your style? This can allow you to gain self-knowledge and practical real-world experience. Maybe a side hustle such as freelancing in another field or moonlighting in your own mini-startup could work for you. Hook into short courses, through Udemy, Alison, eDX or another in the top 50 of online courses. Visit global jobs platforms such as Upwork and plenty of others to see what's on offer in the gig economy – that's where four out of ten Americans will be working by 2020.

Improve your stats

Don't dwell on rejections. Craft a savvy letter of introduction as a cover letter to accompany your resume. Get serious – does five pitches a week sound do-able? Do the work, steer your career, build your brand and let your passion shine through.

Read Online:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/nicholaswyman/2017/10/23/college-grads-what-no-one-is-telling-you-about-getting-hired/#11db2a223b96>

About Nicholas Wyman

Nicholas Wyman is the CEO of the Institute for Workplace Skills and Innovation.

He is the Author of **"Job U - How to Find Wealth and Success by Developing the Skills Companies Actually Need"**

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