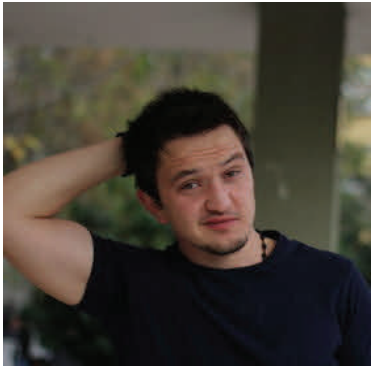


How Competitive Are You In the Job Market?

NOT COMPETITIVE



- Not using career services
- No prepared résumé or cover letter, or one that's poorly prepared
- No references, or using them without permission
- Not attending career fairs or networking events
- Not reviewing the position description
- Not researching the company
- Not practicing interview skills or preparing answers to interview questions
- Arriving at the interview poorly groomed
- Wearing excessive jewelry, makeup, or scent
- Dressing casually, which includes:
 - ⇒ Jeans, tee shirts, tank tops, sneakers, flip flops, skirts or dresses above the knee, cleavage, exposed tattoos and facial piercings
- Arriving late to the interview
- Using cellular or other electronic devices when interacting with employers one-on-one
- Poor eye contact and a weak handshake
- Asking about salary or benefits at the initial interview / meeting
- Providing exaggerated or untrue answers to interview questions
- Showing a lack of enthusiasm for the position
- Not following up after the interview

COMPETITIVE

- Join LinkedIn and other professional social media networking sites to expand your network pool to a more targeted audience
- Review position description
- All written communication should be well-formatted, concise, and free of errors
- Identify at least 3 good references and ask their permission to use them
- View Career Services website's job search section
- Have your resume and cover letter critiqued by Career Services
- Attend Career Fair/Networking events
- Conduct informational interviews or job shadowing once you've identified your career goals



- Review and practice 20 possible interview questions
- Arrive 10 minutes early for the interview
- Arrive with well-kept hair and excellent grooming
- Wear minimal scent, makeup, and jewelry
- Arrive in coordinated business suit:
 - ⇒ Men: Matching, clean, pressed slacks, jacket, tie, with button-down shirt
 - ⇒ Women: Matching skirt/slacks and jacket with conservative blouse (skirts should be slightly below knees and wear hose)
 - ⇒ Shoes should be close-toed.
 - ⇒ Respond to interview questions clearly and concisely and maintain eye contact

MORE COMPETITIVE

Do everything in previous column. In addition:

- Select references who closely match your career goals
 - ⇒ Ask permission to use
 - ⇒ Keep references posted on your progress
- Become a member of at least one professional organization
- Carefully review the position description and tailor your skills and experiences with those described
- Research the company and industry
- Review your resume to be sure it highlights the knowledge, skills, and abilities you possess that closely match the position description
- Demonstrate enthusiastic attitude for the position/company
- Become more active on LinkedIn and other Social Media websites by following companies of interest, networking with professionals



- Practice responding to situational / behavioral interview questions
- Practice and provide a firm handshake, excellent eye contact, straight posture, and good smile
- Attend Career Center Prepare-for-the-Fair events
- Follow-up with a thank you which addresses a few concise reasons why the interview confirmed your interest / fit for the job

MOST COMPETITIVE

Do everything in previous two columns. In addition:

- Practice your interview virtually or in person and have it reviewed by a career counselor
- Answer questions with specific examples from your work or leadership experiences
- Send concise, error-free follow-up correspondence
- Track your progress
- Conduct informational interviews with individuals in the company/occupation
- Thoroughly research the company and where it ranks in its industry; latest news reports, etc.
- Identify any USF alumni that work in the company. Have you looked at LinkedIn?
- Be proactive in LinkedIn through group posts
- Familiarize yourself with various interview formats
- Become known / take a leadership role within professional organizations
- Brand your unique story...STAND OUT!

