

(Love It, Don't Leave It)

Los Angeles Times

circ. 1,292,274

6/26/2005

Los Angeles Times (Orange County Edition)

circ. 183,383

6/26/05

Los Angeles Times (Valley Edition)

circ. 200,568

6/26/2005



Landing the Job of Your Dreams

When it comes to the job search, there's no such thing as a bad idea — as long as it works. Since finding a new job is never easy, even the most organized job seekers often need a little boost to snag that job. To help liven up your search, we've outlined 10 steps to help you conquer today's job market.

1. Proceed with caution before leaving your old job for an exciting new one.

"Too often we leave for greener pastures elsewhere only to find Astroturf," write Beverly Kaye and Sharon Jordan-Evans in "Love it, Don't Leave it: 26 Ways to Get What You Want at Work" (Berrett-Koehler, \$17.95). "The new workplace may have the same, or different (sometimes even worse) challenges, frustrations and disappointments. Check it out before you decide to go."

2. Many employers engage in short phone interviews with candidates as a form of preliminary screening. Make sure to prepare for it as you would an in-person interview.

"After you've researched the company, write down at least three questions that you'd like to ask, and have them next to you when the company calls," said certified career coach Wendy J. Terwelp. "You want to be positive, enthusiastic, sound professional and convey knowledge of the company and the industry."

3. The best job candidates are confident, poised and self-assured during a job interview. Any feelings of self-consciousness can sabotage your interview. Make sure you're at your best by performing what New York-based image consultant Susan Bixler calls the 60-second detail check.

"The 60-second detail check is the visual check — making sure your hair and makeup are in place, that nothing is stuck between your teeth, that things are the way they need to be," said Bixler. "There's also an internal check — what do you need to do to make sure your nonverbal communication says the right thing about you?"

4. If you're worried about how your voice sounds during an interview? Since so much relies on your spoken answers, don't take chances with your approach. Have a friend ask standard interview questions and record your answers. You may find out if you're speaking too quickly or too slowly. It's also a good chance to check those "uh" and "mmm" sounds you make between words.

5. Be real. Your initial interview with a company may go so well that your initial interviewer all but assures you of the job — as long as you follow his or her advice for dealing with the next

round of interviewers. But beware of altering your approach to get the job.

"A lot of HR people try to coach their recruits with what they think a manager wants to hear," said Ted Martin, chief executive officer of Martin Partners, a Chicago placement agency. "Don't let that affect your next interview. Stick with what you know and be genuine in your answers. A good manager knows when someone isn't genuine."

6. If you're looking for job security for the next few decades, consider nursing. According to a report by the Health Resources and Services Administration, hospitals will continue to face nursing shortages through at least 2020. In addition to the increasing average age of today's RNs, the shortage will be brought on by a decline of present and future nursing school students and an increase in the age of current nursing school graduates. Today's nursing school grads are 33, up from 28 in 1980.

7. When writing a thank-you letter after a job interview there's no set rule as to whether it should be handwritten or typed out. It all depends on the relationship you established with the person who interviewed you. What kind of connection did you make? If it was more personal than formal, you should feel free to go the handwritten route.

8. Power aid. Just because you're a friend of the daughter of a well-respected CEO, don't assume he or she will make the best reference. Instead, focus on a list of people who actually know your work performance, such as former managers, colleagues, project leaders, customers, vendors and business associates. Any reference list should include a name, position, company, location, phone number, relationship and background information for each individual who can speak about your abilities. Also, be sure to contact your references to let them know to be expecting a call from a potential employer. They should know the job's description and be able to validate your qualifications with specific examples of accomplishments and results.

9. Follow up. What you say during an interview is always important, but it's what you do after the interview that could land you the job. Sending a follow-up e-mail to your potential employer gives you an opportunity to tie up loose ends and reinstate your desire to work for the company.

10. Know it all. When it's time to move up the ladder, make sure you can become a supervisor who will be respected by others.