

HOW TO CONDUCT EMPLOYER RESEARCH



Researching an employer is an important part of the job search process. Having a well-formed understanding of an employer can help you determine if a job opening is aligned with your career goals, enable you to tailor your application and resume, and set you apart from other candidates, especially during an interview.

WHY SEEK INFORMATION ABOUT PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYERS?

1. Make an informed decision

You may want to research employers to:

- Identify positions related to a particular kind of work, industry or geographic location
- Help refine your job search
- Help select a potential job

2. Set yourself apart

Being knowledgeable about a company or organization can help demonstrate to an employer that you are interested and enthusiastic about working with them.

Researching employers also enables you to create better cover letters and resumes to target specific positions within an organization, as well as better preparing you for the interview.

One of the top complaints among employers is that recent graduates do not appear to have researched their company prior to applying for a job or interviewing with them.

FACTS YOU MAY WANT TO KNOW ABOUT EMPLOYERS

It is important to establish what information you want to know about a potential employer. Your research will provide an overview of the organization and include valuable information such as:

- Company Overview
- Financial Health
- Plans for Future Growth
- Products & Services Offered
- Employer Image/Consumer Opinion
- Employee Diversity
- Location/Branches
- Career Path Options
- Employee Trainings/Professional Development
- Salary Ranges
- Competitors
- Employee Reviews

INCORPORATING YOUR FINDINGS INTO THE INTERVIEW

Simply being informed about an employer does not guarantee a successful interview. You must use that information effectively. Knowledge of products and company background is only helpful if you know how to tactfully weave it into the interview. Spouting out facts or prefacing a question with a lot of memorized details will not convince the employer of your interest or knowledge.

During the interview, most employers will ask some variation of, “Why do you want to work for our organization?” or “What are your long-range career goals?” Relating your skills and passions to those that seem to be needed for the position or valued by the organization can be an effective way to show that you have done your homework. Before the interview, brainstorm how you can help the employer in specific areas based on your research and areas of expertise. Also, remember to highlight transferable skills like communications, writing, sales, or computer knowledge.

Another way to incorporate information is through the questions from your research that you ask the employer, usually towards the end of the interview. Try to ask about one of the employer’s initiatives or products that interest you, explaining why it caught your attention and how your experience may relate.

RESOURCES FOR EMPLOYER RESEARCH

Employer Blog & Social Media

- Great first resource for employer research
- Most in-depth source of information about company from employer perspective
- Company history
- Company leadership & key personnel
- Locations & branches
- Products & services offered
- Recent news & company performance
- Company culture & why you should work there
- Job openings

LinkedIn

- Job search by location or industry
- Helps identify connections you may have within an organization
- Company leadership & personnel
- Location & branches
- Company size

Glassdoor

- Resource for anonymous employee reviews, salary information & interview questions for specific job titles
- Company culture & benefits
- Employee reviews
- Salary information

American Business Journals' Book of Lists- Available on Career Services Website

- List of top employers in a city, ranked by industry
- Competitors
- Company size
- Revenue

Hoovers

- Company overview
- Revenue
- Top Competitors
- Company ranking (Fortune, FT Global, etc.)

There are also employer research resources that are helpful for specific industries

Government Jobs

- Texas Workforce Commission: State jobs, jobs for veterans, training opportunities & transition programs
- A network of federal job information is located at www.usajobs.gov, www.federaljobs.net, and www.ourpublicservice.org.

Startup Jobs

- AngelList.com: create a profile and view job openings at startups in various cities & industries
- Crunchbase: Provides information on startups including investors, funding raised, leadership & key personnel, & company news.

For more information on research tools by industry, check out the “What Can I Do With My Major?” handout on the Career Services website or talk to your Career Counselor/Advisor



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