

Tips & Ideas When Actively Searching for a New Role

In-depth exploration on what strategies
you should adopt as a job seeker.





Introduction

Are you actively seeking a new position but struggling with any of the following...

- Planning your search
- Sourcing opportunities
- Preparing for an interview and standing out

Over the last year, the SaaS and FinTech industries have experienced significant cuts to jobs, funding and resources, meaning there are fewer open positions and a surplus of capable, active candidates.

Our latest whitepaper showcases tips and tricks from recruitment and industry professionals to assist you with your search for your next career move.

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Planning: What is your "Why"?

Amidst the myriad of challenges inherent in the job market, from fierce competition to changing skill requirements, adequate preparation emerges as the cornerstone of a successful job search endeavour. Preparation transcends mere resume refinement or interview practice; it encompasses a holistic approach that includes self-assessment, skill development, market research, and networking strategies. By equipping oneself with the right tools and mindset, candidates can confidently navigate the complexities of the job market and position themselves as desirable assets to prospective employers.

Drawing upon methodologies and real-world expertise, we delve into the intricacies of job search preparation, offering actionable tips, best practices, and practical exercises designed to optimise every stage of the employment-seeking process.



Oakstone International: Tips & Ideas When Actively Searching for a New Role

What is your 'Why'?

Discovering your "why" is pivotal when planning your next career move, as it serves as your guiding light, igniting passion and purpose in your professional pursuits. Understanding your underlying motivations and values cultivates a sense of fulfilment and aligns your career choices with your authentic self. It provides clarity amidst uncertainty, guiding decision-making processes and steering you towards opportunities that resonate with your aspirations. By anchoring your career journey in your "why," you foster resilience in the face of challenges, remain committed to your goals, and ultimately embark on a path that brings professional success and personal fulfilment.

"Approach planning your next move like a sales opportunity. Work out your why – why are you moving? And why do you want to work for that company?"

Leverage what you've done most recently in your network because that will allow you to command your maximum value and make you more visible to the companies you're going after."

Steve Farr, Oakstone Divisional Director



Planning: Engage Your Network

Engaging with your network is crucial when preparing for a job search. It offers valuable insights into job opportunities, industry trends, and company cultures. Networking increases your chances of referrals and recommendations, often leading to hidden job opportunities. Actively participating in professional groups enhances your visibility and credibility within your industry. Additionally, your network provides vital emotional support during the often challenging job search process, offering encouragement and feedback to keep you motivated. In summary, networking isn't just about contacts; it's about leveraging relationships to access information, opportunities, and support that can significantly impact your career advancement.

How can you engage with your network?

- Connect with people on LinkedIn and engage in their content
- Write thought leadership pieces to show your passion and knowledge of your sector or industry.
- Share LinkedIn updates to strengthen your personal brand
- Attend industry events



“When it comes to networking, you can connect and hear about opportunities that might not even be advertised yet.”

Burnice Lange, Oakstone Senior Consultant



*“How often do you see it where people might put a sporting achievement up that they have had over a weekend and that gets more activity and more attention than the professional posts that they put up during the working week?
People connect with that.”*

Andy Strong, Oakstone Divisional Director

"I will look at people's LinkedIn profiles as much as I look at their CV's. You see, a LinkedIn profile and CV should reflect each other 100%."

Joe Jouhal, CEO Avatu



Optimising your public image before job hunting is essential, as employers often vet candidates online. A positive online presence can significantly influence hiring decisions, showcasing professionalism, expertise, and cultural fit.

By curating your social media profiles, such as LinkedIn, and ensuring they align with your desired professional image, you present yourself as a credible and desirable candidate. Investing time in enhancing your digital footprint enhances your chances of securing interviews and positions you for long-term career success.

Planning Your Public Image



Research: Sourcing Opportunities

Identifying and sourcing job opportunities requires a proactive approach and a combination of strategies to uncover hidden opportunities.

- Utilise Online Job Boards: Explore popular job boards like Indeed, LinkedIn, and Glassdoor to search for job openings. Customise your search filters based on location, industry, and job title to find relevant opportunities.
- Company Websites: Visit the career sections of company websites directly to discover job postings that may not be listed on other job boards. Many organisations prefer to advertise openings on their websites first.
- Networking: Leverage your professional network to uncover hidden job opportunities. Inform friends, family, former colleagues, and industry contacts about your job search goals. Attend networking events, industry conferences, and workshops to expand your network and learn about potential openings through word-of-mouth.
- LinkedIn: Use LinkedIn to search for jobs and connect with recruiters, hiring managers, and professionals in your industry. Engage with relevant content, join industry groups, and reach out to individuals who work at companies of interest.
- Recruitment Agencies: Partner with recruitment agencies or headhunters specialising in your field. They often have access to exclusive job opportunities and can match your skills and experience with relevant positions.
- Professional Associations: Join industry-specific professional associations or organisations that offer job boards, networking events, and career resources tailored to your field.



Preparation: Insider Information

“Track clients down or customer success stories to gain insight into the organisation and have well-structured questions so that you can optimise the time you have with the hiring manager., Close on the next steps and ask for feedback.

Andy Strong, Oakstone Divisional Director



Collecting information from existing employees or customers can provide valuable insights and perspectives that can help you prepare for an interview with a company in several ways:

Understanding Company Culture: Employees can offer firsthand accounts of the company culture, work environment, and values. This information can help you gauge whether the company's culture aligns with your own preferences and values, enabling you to tailor your responses accordingly during the interview.

Learning About the Company's Reputation: Customers' experiences with the company can provide insights into its reputation, product/service quality, and customer satisfaction levels. Understanding the company's reputation can help you frame your answers during the interview and demonstrate your awareness of the organisation's strengths and challenges.

Gathering Insider Insights: Existing employees may share details about the company's internal processes, team dynamics, and management style. This insider information can help you anticipate interview questions, tailor your responses to align with the company's expectations, and showcase your understanding of the organisation's operations.

Identifying Pain Points and Opportunities: Feedback from customers may reveal areas where the company excels or areas where it faces challenges. Understanding these pain points and opportunities can help you position yourself as a solution-oriented candidate during the interview by highlighting how your skills and experiences can contribute to addressing these issues.

Preparation: Research

Researching the company is essential for interview preparation as it demonstrates your genuine interest, understanding, and alignment with the organisation. It allows you to tailor your responses to highlight how your skills and experiences align with the company's goals, values, and culture. Understanding the company's products/services, industry position, recent achievements, and challenges enables you to ask insightful questions and engage in meaningful conversations during the interview.

Researching also helps you anticipate interview questions, showcase your knowledge, and position yourself as a well-informed and enthusiastic candidate who is genuinely excited about the opportunity.

"Think, have I looked at their annual report? What are they saying in their annual report about what they want to achieve this year? Be ahead of the game in terms of going in and having a conversation about the organisation. Do you have questions about how they will grow by this percentage? How are you going to do that? What markets are you aiming at? Where is that growth going to come from? What input can I have in that? Don't ask questions for the sake of asking questions. There should be a purpose behind them to keep it professional."

Joe Jouhal, CEO Avatu

"Preparation is key to understanding who you will be meeting with and what could come from that conversation. Knowing as much information as you can will set you up. A great question, which I haven't been asked often by candidates, is, 'What will set me aside from everybody else who's been interviewed, and what do I need to do over and above to make sure that I touch those points.'"

Burnice Lange, Oakstone Senior Consultant

Preparing for an interview

Preparing for an interview is essential as it maximises the opportunity to present oneself confidently and competently. Thorough preparation allows candidates to articulate their skills, experiences, and achievements effectively, demonstrating alignment with the job requirements.

Researching the company, understanding the role, and anticipating interview questions enable candidates to provide tailored responses that showcase their suitability for the position. Additionally, preparation helps alleviate nerves, instils self-assurance, and enhances overall performance during the interview, increasing the likelihood of making a positive impression on the interviewer and securing the job opportunity.

"If you're a salesperson and you want to win an opportunity, you can't know enough about the organisation you're selling to."

Joe Jouhal, CEO Avatu



Executive Interview Tips

- Communicate your personal value proposition
 - Your value proposition demonstrates what you can bring to a company and what makes you the best choice over other candidates. Demonstrating your value highlights what a potential employer would be investing in if they were to hire you.
- Build rapport
 - Whether you are having a Zoom or face-to-face meeting, building rapport is essential in order to forge a relationship and help the person who is interviewing assess how well you will fit with the existing team.
- Showcase behavioural questions: showcase strategic thinking
 - Showcasing strategic thinking in response to behavioural questions demonstrates your problem-solving ability, alignment with organisational goals, and differentiation from other candidates, making you a strong contender for the role. It also highlights your capacity to contribute meaningfully to the company's success and adapt to dynamic work environments.
- Demonstrating executive presence
 - Demonstrating executive presence in an interview conveys confidence, professionalism, and leadership potential, which can significantly influence the interviewer's perception of your suitability for senior roles. It also helps establish credibility and fosters trust, making you more likely to be considered for positions of higher responsibility within the organization.

“Be mindful and have 10 things that you want to leave that room knowing. Allow the conversation to evolve to get you that information.”

Joe Jouhal, CEO Avatu



Summary

Embarking on a journey to find a new position can be both exciting and challenging; however, every application and interview is an opportunity for growth and discovery.

Approaching a career move requires confidence and a strategic mindset, knowing that each interaction is a chance to showcase your leadership prowess and industry expertise. With the right planning and preparation, you will be ready to target new opportunities based on your personal alignment and goals.

From all of the team at Oakstone - we wish you the very best in your search!

