

Looking for a job is tough—keeping one is hard too!

## Where Do You Start?

That's the right question to ask, but the answer might surprise you. The first place to start with your job search is with you. Taking a closer look at yourself—the type of person you are, your habits, your personality, and your motivation—will help you determine the kind of employee you'll be; the type of job you'll do well in; and the "why" that will get you up and off to work morning after morning.

**A great place to start your self-examination is by looking at character traits.**

### 1. Are You Responsible?

Responsibility means following through on all of your agreements, meeting expectations, and making the right choices. Ask yourself:

- Are you willing to take the blame for something, even if you don't believe you are 100% responsible?
- Are you on time nearly every time you go somewhere?
- Do you avoid excuses and just apologize when you are late or make a mistake?
- Do you do what is right for your family and children, even when you are tired and don't want to?

Everyone thinks they are responsible in the moment, but how you react during those hard times really answers the question.

### 2. Are You Honest?

Honesty is telling the truth and representing facts and events correctly. Honesty is important to employers for many reasons, but top of the list is that *honest workers don't steal company resources*. Ask yourself:

- Do you dramatize or exaggerate details, such as on a resume or when you talk about a situation?
- Do you steal from employers; maybe even small things or by doing your own thing while you are getting paid?
- Are you dishonest in your dealings with others, such as at the store, with friends, or family in order to get ahead?

### 3. Are You Dependable?

Being dependable means, you choose to do what's right and honor your commitments, no matter what. Ask yourself:

- Do the people in your life see you as someone they can count on, no matter what?
- Do you follow through on your promises, even when you don't feel like it?

*Employers want workers they can depend on to show up day after day and do the work they're hired for. It's a waste of your boss's time if they have to constantly watch to ensure you're getting your work done.*

### 4. Do You Have Good Habits?

Habits are things that over time, we automatically do without thinking. Some are good and some are bad, and some are just habits. Here are a few habits that are key to getting hired and keeping a job:

- Practice good personal hygiene. This means regularly bathing, washing and grooming your hair,

brushing your teeth, and washing your clothes. This also means washing your hands after using the bathroom. If you don't have good hygiene, then make it a point to do these things regularly.

- Be on time. It's important to be on time to an interview and to your job. If you're not in the habit of being on time, then this needs to change. Think about what you can do to make this happen; like, do the things that might make you late the night before you have to get to work.
- Stop gossiping. Gossip in the workplace can cause a lot of hurt feelings, division, and can get you in trouble. It also creates a toxic environment. It starts first with listening, so make it a point to stop gossip in its tracks by walking away when people begin to do it.
- Get better sleep. You can't do well at your job if you're chronically tired. This may mean saving binge-watching for your days off, turning off your devices an hour before bed, and keeping a reasonable bedtime.

## Practical Application

Okay, hopefully you're making a list of the things you need to work on. If you have a few on your list, don't feel bad. *We ALL have areas in our lives we need to improve.* When we work on them, not only do we become better employees, but our lives improve too!

Once you have started the hard work of working on yourself, there are two other things you need to consider when getting a job.

**First**, you are a unique person and you should consider your personality and then apply for jobs that fit. Know what you like and then go for that; it will make your job much more enjoyable in the long run.

**Second**, consider the "why" of working. What is it that drives you and keeps you focused, even when a job gets tough or boring? Write down the reasons you have a job and refer back to them when you feel like giving up or quitting. Everyone has "those" days and a reminder will help you make it through!

- Is your motivation to take good care of your family? This is a great reason to have a job.
- Is your motivation to get out of debt and become financially stable? If so, this shows taking great responsibility for your life.
- Is your motivation to grow up and take care of yourself? Getting a job is a great way to become independent and live on your own.
- Is your motivation to save up for a reliable car? This is a wonderful reason to be motivated.

You can have more than one on your list. In fact, the more things you are working toward, the more motivated you will be to slog through those tough days. Keep your list on your phone so that when you have one of "those" days, you can remind yourself of the bigger picture.

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