



RESEARCHING EMPLOYERS

by Alicia Bervine, Anne Orange, and Jennifer Whetstone-Jackson

Researching employers is perhaps the single-most important activity you will undertake in your job search. The information you uncover can help you:

- Discover organizations that are a good match for you,
- Tailor your resume and cover letter to highlight your skills and experiences that
- Know what questions to ask employers,
- Demonstrate your interest in and enthusiasm for the organization,
- Answer interview questions with confidence, and
- Make an informed employment decision.

Unfortunately, many students overlook the importance of research when undertaking a job interview with little or no knowledge about the organization. These candidates flounder, asking questions that could be easily answered by a cursory look at the company website or literature. Needless to say, they make a poor impression, because employers often assume lack of research means lack of interest.

WHERE SHOULD YOU BEGIN?

Start by developing a list of organizations in which you might be interested or companies that have the types of jobs or do the type of work that interests you. These could be organizations that visit your campus for career fairs, information sessions, and interviews, or they might be companies you have identified on your own as potential employers. An added bonus: You may discover lesser-known organizations that might be a match for your skills and interests. (Having a problem with this step? Talk with a career counselor in your campus career center for direction.)

Research companies to obtain information in each of the following categories:

Organizational overview: age, size, financial outlook, growth, and structure

Trends/issues in the industry

Mission, philosophy, objectives

Public or private or foreign-owned

LOOK AT UNIVERSITY LIBRARY DATABASES.

These will have information not available elsewhere for free, including financials, industries, market news, trade data, and more. Choose the business databases for information for the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. Some of the most relevant

