

Successful Work Search requires Effective Management of a Major Project

Over the years, I have worked with many Project Managers as their Career Coach. The key 5 components for any Project were recently shared with me by several Project Managers when I worked at a recent Toronto Chapter Career Day Event. Subsequent Coaching meetings with PMI Association members have emphasized the 5 components that lead to the successful closure of a project.

No matter if a Project Manager is managing a large IT or a construction project for one's Job Search project, similar Project Management steps are required for completion of the project. As Project Managers, you must see projects from Project Conception and initiation to Closure. You must: 1) conceptualize the job that you are searching, 2) develop a plan of action, 3) begin and conduct the actual work search, 4) manage the daily search and 5) evaluate the progress of the search on an ongoing basis.

Please keep some of your Project Management skills in mind, when you set out to manage your new project, a successful job search.

1. Project conception and initiation

To start a job search, it is critical that you do an assessment of your skills and experience. What have you accomplished in your career, and what are your immediate and future goals? Consider what you have achieved – both academically and professionally. Evaluate the career path that you have taken so far – where would you like to go in terms of your career? Please consider what is important to you when you conduct your work search – your values, interests, motivations, salary expectations and preferred location? What size of an organization are you interested in working?

2. Project definition and planning

Now is the time to plan your job search project. Chart your plan of action that you will require to reach your goal. What timelines have you set for your work search? What research will you need to do? Will you need to meet people in your field – past employers, members of Associations, networking groups? What information will you need to research to become more knowledgeable about your field of interest, the work outlook and the demands of employers? What organizations are hiring and what will you need to do to effectively market yourself?

3. Project launch or execution

How many people will you meet every week in your job search? Recommendations are that expanding your professional network while maintaining contact with people in your existing network, are key to conducting an effective work search. Depending upon what statistics you read, between 70 -90% of people, looking for new jobs, succeed by tapping into their network; plan your time accordingly. With that in mind, what percentage or how much of your work search time will you focus on building and growing your network – both online and in person? All avenues should be used for your work search – job boards, and company postings. Make certain that your resume, markets your key achievements and results according to the employers to whom you have sent your resumes. Have you test marketed your resume and cover letter to people in your professional network? Do you have success stories that you can share in upcoming job interviews?

4. Project performance and control

Like any project, compare the status of your plan that with the schedule that you set out for your Work Search project. Track your work search process to this point. Are you on schedule? Is your resume according to the expectations of employers for specific jobs? How is your confidence? Is there anything that you can do accelerate the progress of your work search? How many resumes have you sent out?

5. Project close

So your project has been a success and you have accomplished what you set out to do – you have found and secured work in your desired field. How would you evaluate your overall job search? How did you perform in your job interviews? What could you do differently?

After all search project tasks have been completed, you the client can evaluate the highlights and success of your work search project. Like any project, you can learn what you have done well and what you would like to improve – after the project is completed and you have secured your new work role.