

## Management Article: Would You Trade \$250 for \$8,000? Plenty of Today's Job Applicants Don't – December 2008

If you are entering the workforce today, how many times do you think you will change jobs before you retire? A dozen? In fact, Penelope Trunk, a columnist on careers for the *Boston Globe*, estimates that today's new employee will change jobs every two years.

Because it is an important investment, most people spend hours (or days) picking out their next car, but how much time do people devote to investigating their next possible employer?

Certainly choosing the place where you will spend 40 or more hours a week for the next several years should be a decision worth investing lots of time to research.

Having interviewed job applicants many times in my career, I find that most don't prepare themselves by studying the company where they're applying. With so many resources available online and elsewhere, doing even basic research can put you far above most applicants in an interview.

Think about the last time you were a job seeker. I'll wager that you started by updating or preparing your own resume. If you did, ask yourself these questions: How much training have I had in preparing resumes? How much do I know about creating a resume that will be sorted into the **must interview** pile?

If you answered **not much** to either question, you should make a smart money investment in yourself.

Before you start sending out resumes, seek the help of a professional resume preparer. Look for the best-qualified person to prepare a winning resume for you. If your new position equates to 10K more a year, why worry about spending \$250 to make sure that your resume looks sharp enough to get you an interview?

Not presenting your resume in the best possible light can cost you a small fortune. Last week I tried to convince a bright 36-year-old woman who had been laid off from a \$14/hr job in the mortgage industry to ask for \$16/hr. She had the skills and experience to warrant the increase, but her resume sucked because she prepared it herself. As a result, she was struggling to get interviews for jobs that paid less than the one she lost.

I advised her to invest in having her resume professionally done. She said that she couldn't afford it. Assuming a better resume could get her a \$2 raise, she breaks even three weeks from her hire date. From then on, she's banking an extra 4k a year.

She should have invested in marketing herself to prospective employers with a professional resume, and so should you when your time comes.

I've had a lot more training reviewing resumes than preparing them. From the hiring side of the table, I can report that most resumes I see look like they were created by the applicant. I rarely see a resume that has obviously been professionally written and edited, even when I

am interviewing executives. A professionally prepared resume is a smart investment in yourself and an easy way to make the right impression, even before the first interview question.

Remember, only you can make BUSINESS GREAT!

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