



DEGREE SOLUTIONS



Career Success Kit



It's no secret that we'd all like to make a bigger salary. By finding in-demand careers, polishing your resume, and negotiating a higher salary, you can be taking home more money every month. Whether you're just accepting your first offer or trying to decide which direction to go with your education, these 5 secrets to increasing your earning potential will allow you to make informed decisions about your financial future.

1 Polish Your Resume

The job market, regardless of the current state of the economy, is a highly competitive space. You only have one chance for your resume to make an impact on most employers, and it could be the reason you aren't getting that job you're perfect for. Many

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employers spend less than ten seconds scanning a resume and deciding if it is worth further consideration. You've spent plenty of time preparing your resume and you likely

think it's pretty good, but it may be the reason you are still looking for work. Resumes can be filled with small style, grammatical, word-usage, and spelling errors.

How do you overcome all of these issues? Simple, take advantage of the free resume check we are offering and get an idea of how well your resume is working for you. You are likely to be surprised at the small mistakes that we find. While small mistakes may seem insignificant, they can lead to major issues. Fixing the little errors will make a huge impact on your job search.



2 Find In-Demand Careers

The Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook features in-depth profiles that outline work responsibilities, office environments, education requirements, average pay scales and employment projections. According to the most recent reports, human resource managers, interpreters and translators, event planners and casino employees are in



high demand. The energy industry is also undergoing rapid growth due to regulation changes and an increased focus on developing alternative fuel sources. Positions for petroleum engineers, who earn \$130,280 per year, have skyrocketed 227%, making it the nation's second fastest-growing job

behind oil, gas and mining operators. Other In-Demand Industries include: Financial Services, Teaching, Medical Services, and Computer Services.

3 Know your Worth

You've invested a lot of time and energy into your education and skills. Before you accept the first salary offered to you, know what you're worth. You can start by looking at the Bureau for Labor statistics to see what people in your same field are making. It won't give you a concrete number, but instead a range of what you can expect to receive. There are other places you can also look to give you a good idea of your market value.

Payscale.com collects salary and benefit data from visitors across the country so you should be able to find what other people in your area are receiving. Salary.com is another service you can use. They compare salaries from visitors and customize it by company size and location.

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Not only will you want to look at what other people in the industry are making, but you'll want to take into consideration any special training or skills you possess along with long term benefits. Contributions to a retirement plan or a pension should



be reviewed. Even though an offer may have a lower take-home salary, the benefits might make it the better choice. Be sure to look for structured raises, stock options, and bonuses as part of the offering package. The more informed you are about your worth, the more prepared you are to negotiate.

④ Understand Cost of Living

As the three most populated states, Texas, California and New York consistently land on the Top 5 lists for highest employment levels, largest concentration of jobs and top-paying wages. Unfortunately, the cost of living in those states is far higher than in other parts of the country where salaries may be lower. When you are offered a salary, evaluate it with the cost of living and see how it compares. A lower paying

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job in a different state may be the best choice depending on the local cost of living.

North Dakota

You'll also want to look at the unemployment rates in areas you may wish to live. Washington, Oregon, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island are competitive in many fields. Leading the pack for the nation's fewest unemployed residents is North Dakota, which is experiencing a tremendous construction and mining boom. South Dakota, Nebraska, Hawaii, Utah, Iowa, Vermont and Wyoming all have less than a 5 percent unemployment rate, far below the national average of 7.5 percent.

5 Don't take No for an answer

If you've already accepted a salary and are simply looking for a raise, be prepared to do some negotiating. Inform your supervisor that you are there seeking an increase in your salary. Bring several documents with you to back up your request. Documents to consider include compliments in emails from clients or co-workers, lists of accomplishments or training, and salaries in your current area.



Offer a salary that you'd be happy to accept and negotiate from there. Remember to stay confident with your body language and your tone. If there are moments of silence, don't be afraid of it. Use it to think through your defense and allow your

supervisor to think. If you are granted a raise, ask when you can expect it to take effect. If a raise simply isn't plausible right now, ask when you can negotiate again.

Whatever sacrifices are made, you can be sure that your effort will be well worth it in the end.

Now that you know how to get that higher salary, it is time to get started. Getting a higher salary may mean relocating to a better area for job growth and lower living expenses, or going back to school to get a

higher degree. Whatever sacrifices are made, you can be sure that your effort will be well worth it in the end.

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