



KING FAHD UNIVERSITY OF PETROLEUM & MINERALS

HOW TO GET THE JOB YOU WANT

PERSONAL SKILLS PROGRAM

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INTRODUCTION

Getting a job, or even just being lucky enough to get an interview, is becoming more and more difficult. But, just like any task in business, you must have a clear objective and a plan. The jobseeker must be well organized and he can increase his self-confidence through careful preparation.

Imagine for a moment that you are Ahmed, a recent University graduate, and you have just met a very famous job counselor named Basel whose books you have seen in every bookshop. Perhaps he was seated next to you on a plane and you recognized him. You take the opportunity to introduce yourself and then you say:

Ahmed: How do you do, Mr. Basel. I have seen all your books, and this is really a great honor to meet you. Do you have a few minutes to talk with me?

Basel: Yes. I'd be happy to.

Ahmed: I graduated from university this summer and want to start working. Usually, your topics and advice are for mature workers already in business. Can you help me?

Basel: Sure. When you're looking for a job, it really doesn't matter how much experience you have. Successful people stick with the basic principles. They know their goals and objectives, and they have a plan.

Ahmed: Sounds good so far. But don't the companies want experience?

Basel: That helps, of course. But I'm talking now about the steps that anyone must take BEFORE he even applies for a job. I mean, the person must be clear about some very basic points. When I advise both new job seekers and experienced professionals, I use a diagram called THE JOB TREE to help them think and make important decisions.

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Ahmed: The Job Tree?

Basel: Let me explain. Imagine for a minute a huge tree standing very tall on top of a hill. Among the green leaves are 6 of the biggest apples in the world – they look like big red basketballs! Each one has a very important question written on it. The first apple up at the top of the tree asks “WHAT are my goals and objectives?” Next to it the second apple says: “WHERE do I want to work?” The third one says: “IN WHAT kind of company do I want to be?” Over at the other side of the tree there are 3 other questions:

“WHAT knowledge and skills do I have to offer?”
“DO I know what salary is fair for me and for the job level?” And, lastly, WHAT kind of working conditions do I prefer?”

Ahmed: Those are tough questions. I'm not sure that even an experienced person could answer those quickly.

Basel: Well, that's the point. These questions are so important. They HAVE TO take up a lot of time. But the secret is: Find YOUR answers to these questions BEFORE you decide on applying for a job and then accepting an offer.

And remember, these questions are designed to provide you with help. In other words, the more time you spend preparing for employment, the less time you'll spend upset and frustrated with your job situation later on.

Ahmed: So, once a job seeker answers these questions from the Job Tree, then what? I mean, I'm young and looking for work in my field. I don't have any idea what employers are looking for.

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Basel: First of all, the needs of employers haven't changed much since I was looking for my first job. In a few words, generally, they're looking for Present Abilities and Future Potential of young people. Specifically, though, there are several questions an employer may have for you. For example, you should be able to answer the following standard questions:

How do you handle failure? How do you solve conflicts?

Are you flexible? Honest? Loyal?

Have you traveled to foreign countries?

Can you work on more than one project at a time?

Have you set goals and met them in a specified time limit?

Why are you trying to work with our company?

And remember, you should have an answer AND hopefully an **example** to really make your point clear. This will show the employer that you really understand HIS NEEDS. I mean, frankly, that's why the employer wants to hire you. You need to show that you can fulfill the needs of the company with your Present Abilities and Future Potential.

Ahmed: It seems that the same basic skills and personal qualities that made me successful in school are in demand at work too. Leadership, Problem Solving, Teamwork, Innovative Thinking, and Communication.

Basel: Yes, exactly. Let me tell you what some employers have told me. Sometimes, young jobseekers don't take the time to prepare themselves. They can't answer clearly why they want to work for a certain company. They don't know enough about the company's products and services, and why they are in business.

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Ahmed: So, I'll have to show that I have researched the company and know why I am there. Then, I have to think clearly about my immediate and long-term job and career goals. Just like the questions on the Job Tree, right?

Basel: That's right. I have another important bit of advice.

Ahmed: What's that?

Basel: In the interview, SMILE. Look good, and smile.

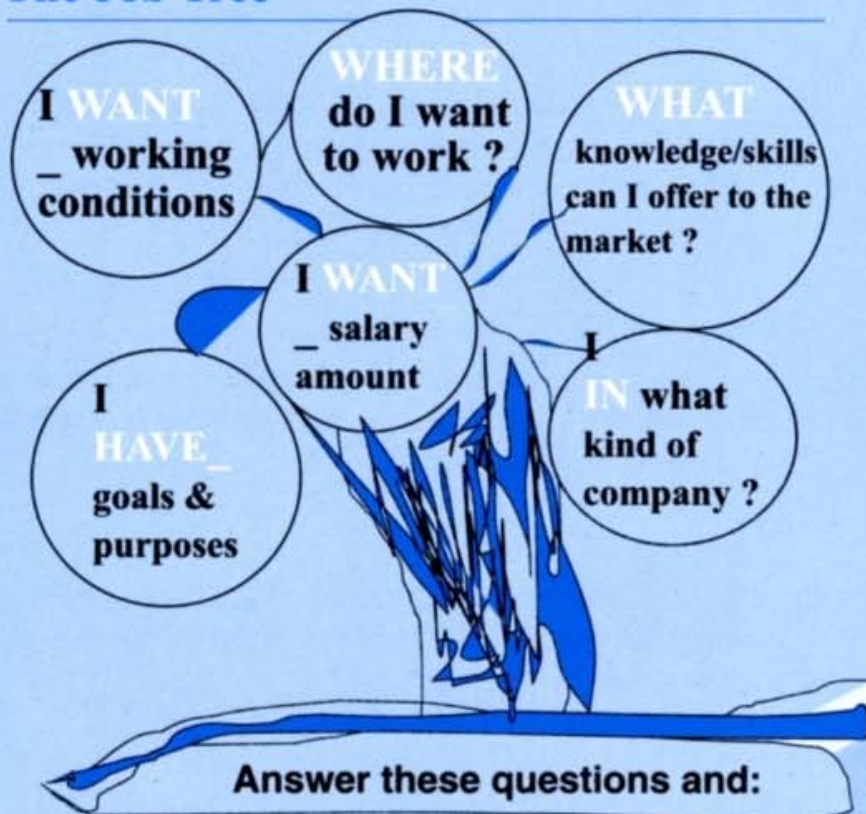
Ahmed: SMILE. Look good, and smile?

Basel: Yes, that's important. I always say: You never get a second chance to make a first impression. Dressing well and smiling at appropriate times, along with a firm, polite and professional handshake really make a difference.

I would like to add 2 more tips. The first is: Give your answer and STOP talking, because too much talking in an interview can weaken your image. Answer completely but as briefly and directly as possible. The second tip is always say "Thank you" at the end of the interview and ask for the person's business card. I say this because being polite always helped and never hurt anyone. And the business card will allow you to send a follow-up note to the interviewer, either printed or by e-mail.

The last point is important. I remember when I couldn't decide who to hire between three excellent people a few years back. Two days after we completed the interviews we received a written thankyou note from only one of the candidates. We knew that a person like that would always make our company look good with his professional and polite behavior. He got the job and is now doing well in our management training program.

The Job Tree



- You will learn your needs,
- and Your position in the market,
- Then, adjust them to the current market demands.