





















1		<p><b>Do you know what an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) is?</b></p> <p>An ATS is used to parse (scan) resumes and find the ones that best match a job description based on keywords.</p>
2		<p><b>Do you know how to optimize your resume for an ATS so it passes the screening phase of a job posting?</b></p> <p>Most people don't realize the resume they submit on an ATS should be altered to include all of the keywords on the job description. If you don't, you will most likely not get put in the folder to be reviewed by the recruiter.</p>
3		<p><b>Is your LinkedIn profile 100% complete?</b></p> <p>You must have three recommendations and all the main fields filled out to show up in a recruiter search on LinkedIn.</p>
4		<p><b>Is your LinkedIn profile keyword optimized and formatted for recruiter searches?</b></p> <p>Besides a photo, you must make sure your title, summary, and work history are written out in a way that not only is visually easy for a recruiter to scan, but also have the keywords that match the job posting they are trying to fill.</p>
5		<p><b>Do you know what a "top-fold" is and why 4 out of 5 hiring managers are using it to decide if they should contact you for an interview?</b></p> <p>A "top-fold" is the first five things that come up about you when a recruiter searches on your name using the Internet. If they see anything questionable, or if they can't find you at all, you will not be considered for the job.</p>
6		<p><b>Do you have a commenting strategy online to ensure you are being seen as a credible professional in your industry and/or area of expertise?</b></p> <p>One of the best ways to have hiring managers and recruiters learn about you is through insightful comments you make on articles and blog posts online. These are linked to your profile and can inspire a recruiter to contact you about unlisted job opportunities. The key is to know how to comment in a way that showcases your credibility.</p>

7		<p><b>Do you have an Interview Bucket List?</b></p> <p>An Interview Bucket List is a list of target companies that impress you based on what they do for work. You analyze this list to better understand what types of companies would best suit you professionally and use the information to tailor your Personal Brand and job search to get employers' attention.</p>
8		<p><b>Do you know if there are at least 200 companies in your commutable area who meet your employer criteria?</b></p> <p>If you can't identify at least 200 companies that could potentially hire you for what you want to do within your commutable area, then you can expect your job search to take much longer and must plan accordingly.</p>
9		<p><b>Do you know what an "informational interview" is?</b></p> <p>Informational interviews are used to strategically build relationships with new contacts as a way to expand your networking efforts. FACT: Networking is currently the #1 way people are getting jobs.</p>
10		<p><b>Do you know how to successfully set up and execute an informational interview with a total stranger?</b></p> <p>To secure an informational interview, you must know how to introduce yourself in a way that will make a stranger agree to meet with you. You must also prepare and complete the informational interview in a way that earns their respect and trust.</p>
11		<p><b>Do you know what "behavioral interviewing" is and why recruiters use it?</b></p> <p>Behavioral interviewing is a technique used to make you answer open-ended questions. This enables a recruiter to assess your personality, aptitude, and experience more fully.</p>
12		<p><b>Do you have well-crafted answers for all of the major behavioral questions recruiters are known to ask on interviews?</b></p> <p>Behavioral questions are often trick questions designed to get you to tell the truth. If you do not answer them honestly, and in the right fashion, your answers can disqualify you from the hiring process.</p>

<b>13</b>		<p><b>Do you know how to write attention-grabbing introduction letters?</b></p> <p>Introduction letters replace cover letters in that they are used to showcase your connectivity to an employer and your communication style. An introduction letter must get them at “hello” to be effective.</p>
<b>14</b>		<p><b>Do you know what “personal branding” is and how to leverage it in your job search?</b></p> <p>Personal branding is the understanding you are a business-of-one who must have a unique marketing strategy in order to attract an employer’s attention. It is laser-like in focus and shows your unique value as an employee (i.e. how you save or make companies money).</p>
<b>15</b>		<p><b>Can you tell a stranger what value you bring to a company in 30 seconds or less?</b></p> <p>You must be able to summarize your professional experience and value to an organization quickly using quantifiable accomplishments to validate your claims.</p>
<b>16</b>		<p><b>Are you 100% comfortable explaining any negative experiences in your professional past (i.e. getting fired, laid-off, police record, DUI, etc.)?</b></p> <p>93% of communication is non-verbal. This means, if you have any anger, fear, or embarrassment harboring in your mind, it is coming across in interviews via body language, facial expressions and voice tone. Hiring managers sense this and do not hire people who are not confident in articulating their professional past.</p>
<b>17</b>		<p><b>Do you have a clear sense of what you want in your next career move?</b></p> <p>Indecision or vagueness is a sign of weakness to hiring managers and people you network with. You cannot say you will “do anything” because it is not believable. It sounds desperate. You must be able to specifically share what you want in a job.</p>

<b>18</b>		<p>Do you know how to combat age discrimination in an online job search?</p> <p>Age discrimination is really “experience discrimination.” You must be able to see where the disconnect between your age and your experience is causing hiring managers to pass on you. Then, you must build a strategy to reconcile it.</p>
<b>19</b>		<p>Are you confident in your abilities as a professional, even if you aren't currently working?</p> <p>It's very common for job seekers to have “Crisis of Confidence,” when looking for work. The fear of rejection and being inadequate rises up, especially if you are currently unemployed. However, you must find your confidence and stay positive as a way to convey the right message to employers. If you cannot maintain this, you should seek support.</p>
<b>20</b>		<p>Do you have an objective person you regularly check in with as a way to make sure your professional efforts are in alignment with your career goals?</p> <p>From athletes to executives, the best performers use coaches to help them stay focused, develop their skills, and maintain motivation. If you want to find a job, you must have someone you can work with to coach you through the process. Support is vital!</p>

**Scroll to the next page and take our  
Job Search Preparation Quiz.**



## Job Search Preparation: 20-Point Checklist

By CareerHMO Founder, J.T. O'Donnell



Question	Yes	No
Do you know what an “Applicant Tracking System (ATS)” is?		
Do you know how to optimize your resume for an ATS so it passes the screening phase of a job posting?		
Is your LinkedIn profile 100% complete?		
Is your LinkedIn profile keyword optimized and formatted for recruiter searches?		
Do you know what a “top-fold” is and why 4 out of 5 hiring managers are using it to decide if they should contact you for an interview?		
Do you have a comment strategy online to ensure you are being seen as a credible professional in your industry and/or area of expertise?		
Do you have an Interview Bucket List?		
Do you know if there are at least 200 companies in your commutable area who meet your employer criteria?		
Do you know what an “informational interview” is?		
Do you know how to successfully set up and execute an informational interview with a total stranger?		
Do you know what a “behavioral interview” is and why recruiters use it?		
Do you have well-crafted answers for all the major behavioral questions recruiters are known to ask on interviews?		
Do you know how to write attention-grabbing introduction letters?		
Do you know what “personal branding” is and how to leverage it in your job search?		
Can you tell a stranger what value you bring to a company in 30 seconds or less?		
Are you 100% comfortable explaining any negative experiences in your professional past (i.e. getting fired, laid-off, police record, DUI, etc.)?		
Do you have a clear sense of what you want in your next career move?		
Do you know how to combat age discrimination in an online job search?		
Are you confident in your abilities as a professional, even if you aren’t currently working?		
Do you have an objective person you regularly check in with as a way to make sure your professional efforts are in alignment with your career goals?		

All rights reserved. Cannot be reproduced or distributed without consent from J.T. O'Donnell.

E-mail: [info@careerhmo.com](mailto:info@careerhmo.com) | Twitter: [@itodonnell](https://twitter.com/itodonnell) | LinkedIn: [/in/itodonnell](https://www.linkedin.com/in/itodonnell)

# Job Search Preparation: 20-Point Checklist

By CareerHMO Founder, J.T. O'Donnell



## Tally Your Score

Give yourself 5 points for each “Yes” answer and 0 points for each “No” answer.

Score Range	Job Search Preparation
0-25 Points	<b>Poor:</b> You can expect a much longer than normal job search. Your lack of knowledge will result in a lot of job search frustration.
26-50 Points	<b>Average:</b> The majority of job seekers fall in this range. They extend their job search because they falsely feel they are doing enough of the right things, but actually aren't. This results in a feeling of helplessness that often slows down a search due to lack of effort. Why keep at it when you aren't getting results, right?
51-75 Points	<b>Okay:</b> You've been trying to stay in the loop and stay updated on the best way to market yourself, but there is plenty of room for improvement. The good news is with a little effort, you could find yourself seeing some excellent results.
76-100 Points	<b>Good:</b> You have committed yourself to understand the “new rules” of a job search and are ahead of the competition. All you need is a few tweaks and some motivation and you should find a job you'll be happy with.