

Richard here: I recently attended a training seminar held by [Challenger, Gray, & Christmas, Inc.](#) titled "Assessing Skills for the Current Labor Market". The main intent of this seminar was to educate and encourage attendees about career search activities. The course included some great instruction and a very useful handout. My notes from the seminar are below – none of which is pulled from the CG&C, Inc. printed material.



**Items marked with this symbol require action!**

## General Information:

- 80% of all jobs are not on the internet (internal openings, internal recommendations, etc.)
- Most time spent on the internet is wasted
- Companies hire the person they LIKE the most – not necessarily most qualified person










In communications, use 'sparkling' adjectives that describe you and weave them into the sentences you use.

- Always be yourself and be prepared
  - Use terms you know and use regularly
  - Be authentic
  - Do your research on the company / industry
- The interview is a GUEST / HOST relationship → accept 'all' offers
- There are 2 types of interviewers:
  - Amateurs (which are tougher)
  - Professionals (HR)
- There are 2 types of interviews:
  - Courtesy Interview (could be an informal setting... like at H.E.B.)
  - Formal opening
- The Interviewer is constantly thinking:
  - What's in this person for me / the company?
  - Can this person solve my problems?
  - Your problems / concerns don't matter (e.g. - doesn't care about commute time...)
- Body Language Notes:
  - Carefully and subtly pace the interviewer
  - Sit straight – relaxed. No crossing of anything.
- Notes on the "Meal Interview":


- o You are NOT there to eat!
- o Match food for food (i.e. – have food in front of you – similar quantity, similar quality)
- o Beverage choices (iced tea, soda, or coffee... NEVER alcohol)
- o Absolutely NO take-home

**Example Interview Questions:**

1. “Tell me about yourself.”
  - a. Assume they have NOT read your resume / don’t know what it says
  - b. Do NOT refer to your resume / keep the focus on you
  -  Get some relevant adjectives together
  - d. Use terms that describe your skills & abilities ONLY – not history or opinion
  - e. Do NOT use qualifiers (“I believe...” instead say, “I am / I know...”)
  - f. Don’t ask questions – you’ll get your chance at the end
2. “What kind of position are you looking for?”
  - a. Focus on what you can do for the company
  -  Make a list of problems you can solve
3. “What kind of money are you looking for?”
  - a. Get the interviewer to set the price
  - b. Respond, “I expect to be compensated in line with the responsibilities of the position.”
  - c. If still pushed, respond by commenting on the company’s fairness and trust in a fair offer
  - d. Or maybe finally, “I would like to be making what I made at my last position...”
  - e. If asked, “Would you take less?”, then answer “I would consider it.” (Do NOT commit!)
  - f. NEVER give a reason why you declined a position. Keep the bridge up and not on fire!
4. “What do you need to improve? What is one of your weaknesses?”
  - a. This question is an ELIMINATOR
  -  Give a mild fault, but immediately redirect to how to make it positive and qualify it
  - c. Only give one example: you do not have two faults!
    - i. “I am not aware of anything else that would prevent me from doing the job”
5. “Why did you leave your company?”
  -  You should NOT fault your previous company (e.g. – the contract ended)

- b. MUST be honest
  - c. Once you give your one reason, RESIST more detail at all costs
6. “Where do you see yourself in 5 years?”
- a. I would like to continue (fill in job you are applying for) with increasing responsibility
7. “Are you willing to relocate?”
- a. Be firm and answer honestly
  - b. If you are willing, then say yes
  - c. If you are not willing, then say “I would consider it”
8. “Did you get a severance package when you left your last job?”
- a. “Yes.” Period.
  - b. If asked to elaborate, then say something like “My previous employer was very generous but asked me not to discuss the details.”
9. “Why should I hire you? What makes you different?”
-  a. Stick to your good adjectives / active voice and elaborate – do this ahead of time
10. “What do you do best?”
-  a. Stick to your good adjectives / active voice and elaborate – do this ahead of time
11. “Tell me something in your life / career that didn’t turn out the way you expected.”
-  a. Make it a positive experience – do this ahead of time

**Questions for the Interviewer:**

1. No real details – leave on a high note
2. On the 1<sup>st</sup> interview: what is the next step?
-  3. On the 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> interview: ask more detailed questions but not about offers – have questions ready

**Thank You’s:**

1. Follow-up within 48 hours – call and thank on the phone
2. Consider a **hand-written** thank you note
3. Cautiously send an email
  - a. Don’t know how they will interpret tone, if they will read, delete, went to spam folder, someone else (secretary) reads it and deletes – don’t know if it goes through
  - b. Follow-up with a hand-written note

## Search Strategy:



Get on LinkedIn

- a. Join groups
- b. Get contacts
- c. Do it professional, but include some of 'you' to stand out



Make a written plan of your efforts

- a. Lookup an research 25-30 companies within a 1 hour radius you would consider
- b. Make a list of everyone you know (do NOT judge!)
  - i. Reach out to these people (1 per day?)
    1. Ask for referrals
    2. Solicit advice on resume (thank them!)
3. Search for yourself on search engines (name, city, school, organizations, company)
  - a. Know what's out there and try to address any concerns



Keep track of your tasks / accomplishments

5. Do NOT pay anyone for job searching services
6. Answer your phone when it rings – call-backs are rare
7. If you don't have one, then get a professional email address ([name@domain.com](mailto:name@domain.com))
8. Check out some websites:
  - a. [www.indeed.com](http://www.indeed.com)
  - b. [www.simplyhired.com](http://www.simplyhired.com)
    - i. Check for people who work at company you desire and their LinkedIn profile