How to get an actual job on

Linked in

6 Steps

To getting in front of and past in-house recruiters

Introduction

Why the hell would you listen to me?

I'm 35 and I've failed my way through enough self-help material to write a Coldplay album.

That being said…
- I had a legitimate job 8 months before I graduated in 2008 - *which turned out to be pretty freaking clutch in retrospect*.
- I later exclusively leveraged Linkedin to land final interviews in 3 booming cities (Austin, Seattle, Portland), in 3 different industries (tech, apparel, & whatever we say Amazon does these days), across 3 distinct disciplines (FP&A, Revenue Operations, Project Management) - *despite having only worked at a bank for a decade*.
- I received offers and was able to pick my path, something I repeated a year later.
- Plus… I've hired people.

To be clear - I am a moron. I don't claim to have any profound knowledge that you can't find above the fold on Google.

BUT

I'm a frequent contributor on reddit and it is painful hearing how many people are struggling to make major career moves during a time where that is not only more feasible than ever, but also more practical.

Switching jobs and industries has become the #1 way to really get ahead and provide for yourself, your family, and your own damn happiness. So it's time to make something happen.

So WTF is this?

This started out because I continually give the same advice when people ask (again primarily on reddit). It seemed easier to just type it up, make it look pretty, and point people to it.

Basically this is going to do 3 things for you:
- Clean up your flawed approach.
- Get you directly in front of people who can actually hire you.
- Finally get you moving towards making the career changes you so desperately want.

What if this doesn't help me?

Let's just agree that you can judge this however you want and you're probably right. But it really comes down to your effort.

The fact is, you are reading this because you are unhappy with your current situation and you aren't making things happen.

We live in a time where you can network and get a job from the bathroom. But that doesn't necessarily mean it is easier to get a job. That always comes down to supply and demand.

REMEMBER: It always feels hopeless right up to the point where it starts working. If you are consistent in your effort, you'll get where you want to be.

This is a **quick fix guide** to get you moving towards where you want to be. You still have to do the work and it's by no means exhaustive.

Kapeesh?

If you like this guide and want more, just join my new subreddit r/uncommoners and I'll drip the links there.

1 - Fix Your Sh*t

This guide is about using LinkedIn, so first things first.

1 - Update Photo. You know what to do, a good headshot is easy to come by. Get your friend to take a picture of you. If they won't do it, ask your mom. The name of the game here is to look friendly and approachable. This isn't a 'no smile, look like a badass' team photo from Varsity soccer. It wasn't cool then and it isn't cool now. Your face is the image, make it big.

2 - Add a Banner Image. The typical advice is to add something that is in line with your industry. But stock images of bar charts isn't going to cut it. Instead, find a very high res image of the city you want to be employed in. The image ultimately needs to be 1,584 x 396 need so try and get something at least that wide and crop it within Linkedin after you upload.

3 - Fix Your URL. Get a clean URL that would look good on a resume. To do that, login via computer –> go to your profile page –> on the top right click 'edit public profile & url' –> do just that. Your name works well. If thats taken, add your middle name. If that's taken, get creative or use separators. Keep it simple and professional. NO NUMBERS & NO SYMBOLS.

4 - Visibility Settings. While in the menu listed above, scroll down and ensure you profile picture is available to the public as well as all of your section content.

5 - Intro. You need a headline. Your headline should - at a minimum - be your current job title and whatever you oversee. Ex: FP&A manager overseeing US Deposits at ABC Corp. *Just starting out and don't have a title yet?* No problem. Write "Entry-Level" then the job. Example: Entry Level FP&A Analyst.

But don't leave it at that, use this section to match with whoever you are targeting. Put in relevant keywords and experience to match the role you right now. Ex: Experience with Javascript. Separate this from your "title" with a bar or dash. *Not sure what to put?* Read the job reqs for what you are applying to. But above all DON'T LIE. Only write down what you can back up. Finally, be sure to click 'show education' to finish out the intro section.

6 - Open up. You want to be found by recruiters, ya? Under the header info on your main page, click 'open to work'. Add in any and every job title you have been looking at (revisit this frequently to add or edit), select the locations you will work at, click 'Yes' to remote, and finally click 'Recruiters Only' at the bottom.

7 - Add Experience. The main purpose of a profile page is highlighting your experience. Edit the section by using common sense. A few tips… it just looks bad if the company you are referencing doesn't have an image. If they don't, reach out and request they do, as this is now affecting your brand.

The 'job title' you list shows up in large bold font. Leverage this to highlight what is important. So if you were a lead analyst write "Lead Analyst", but also include relevant detail. "Lead Analyst - Supporting Sales Optimization" is more powerful.

If you are light on experience, also utilize the description section. Add a maximum 3 bullets with punchy accomplishments, skills, or responsibilities. Keep it short and quick. After you have a bit of experience remove this entirely. Repeat after me, THIS IS NOT MY RESUME, THIS IS A PROFILE PAGE.

8 - Education. Self explanatory. If you have a good GPA you can list it. If you don't, don't. What is a good GPA? Anything over 3.7. Anything under is probably giving you some regrets right now but don't sweat it. If you graduated with any cum laude status… note it after your degree but before your major. Ex: "Bachelor of Science, Magna cum laude, Finance, 3.9/4.0

You may also list awards you won, meaningful clubs, and any jobs worked during school in the description section. Again keep it short, punchy, and organized. Reminder that unless you have 3 items you shouldn't use bullets.

9 - Other Shiz. Add volunteer experience and skills. Get endorsements from friends, coworkers, professors, parents, siblings, pets, John Stamos and whoever else. Do they matter? Maybe. Spend more time on pursuing recommendations. These will come over time and are more powerful when they are sincere.

10 - Connect. Connections matter. Correction. REAL connections matter. Nothing happens when you get 500+ connections other than they stop counting. Why do they stop? Because unlike other platforms nobody actually cares how many friends you have.

The point isn't to have the biggest network, its to have an actual network. If you don't know the people in yours, there isn't much point is there? Not only that, connections can be seen by recruiters. So if you are connected to someone they know is an awful employee or a serial killer, that may reflect on how you are perceived. For this reason build your network intentionally.

2 - Resumes (PLURAL)

You only have one resume? Let's fix that.

There are 2 reasons you should have a different resume tailored to each industry you are applying to.

1 - Every industry / sector features its own vernacular and key points of desirable expertise. Even if you don't have these yet, you need to acknowledge you know what they are and you are thrilled for the chance to develop them.

2 - You should be tweaking your resume for each industry, not each application. Constant adjustments mean you will make mistakes and it's also not an efficient use of your time. Get it done and then move on to the real work.

But how will I know what to change for each industry?

Work backwards. Find the perfect job posting that you know you won't get and scan it for desired experience and common phrases. Do this 4-5 times and you will know how you can frame whatever experience you do have to point towards the desired skill. *This also serves as preliminary research for phone screens and interviews, so do it with some effort, eh?*

In terms of building your actual resume I have one piece of advice that you need to follow. STOP USING MICROSOFT WORD. Google docs offers a superior line that actually look good and might even help you stand out. Believe it or not, you can have a line of color on a resume in the 21st century. The future is now!

To see the templates, go to Google Docs, click on templates and pick one. I prefer Serif, but users choice.

Sometimes Google Docs & pdfs in general don't auto populate application load templates. If you begin to have that issue and it drives you insane, you can create a nearly identical second version in Word to use for upload templates or just manually enter.

The creation of your resume varies considerably by experience, field, and personal preference. If you don't have perspective on that I would suggest googling samples until you find your muse.

That being said here are my 10 musts for everyone:

1. For the love of God, no typos. Read it 1,000 times and have 3 other people read it at least twice.

2. You need to have your contact information including a professional email. That can be @gmail, but the bit before that can't have the words *crazy*, *sexy*, or numbers with implications.

3. Use the same verb tense throughout. Example: If you made coffee during your internship and first job, write *brewed* both times. Not *brewed* once and *brew* the second time. The lone exception is your current position where present tense applies.

4. Your resume can be more than one page. What it cannot be is anything between 1 and 1 1/2 pages. If you go to 2, make sure you can fill the space.

5. Only write checks that your @$$ can cash. Never lie.

6. If you're light on experience, move the skills portion above your work experience and place it underneath education.

7. No mention of social fraternities or sororities. I know you signed up thinking it would help you get a job. It probably will but via network, not on your resume.

8. Write what you can do rather than just listing courses you took. Accounting II isn't impressive. Being able to amortize, depreciate and whatever else you freaks do, might be.

3 - Hunt Some Heads

Odds are your linked in strategy has gone something like this. *I made my profile and I've made myself open to hearing offers. Nobody is contacting me. This thing is garbage.*

Or maybe you have been filling out applications like your life depends on it. In fact, you have been crushing it and using Easy Apply to ship out 10 a day. Still no dice.

Here's the thing. Easy Apply makes things… easy. It takes you 9 seconds to apply for a job, meaning that the barrier has gotten so low you don't even have to lift your leg to step over it.

This change has resulted in recruiters being FLOODED with applications, most of which are just unqualified, mildly interested scattershot. All of this is to say that if you want a recruiter to give a damn, you should take all the time saved through the wonders of technology and reinvest it in pursuit of their attention.

What to know about recruiters:
- Recruiters come in two forms, **in-house** and **external**. External recruiters are fantastic for specialized roles and executives. They are generally awful for you. This is because they receive compensation based on placements and often as a % of salary. Unless you move the needle for them, they won't move the needle for you.
- In-house recruiters are directly tapped into the company needs, hiring managers, & are incredibly useful for getting an interview.
- Recruiters (in-house) have 1 job… to find qualified candidates and place people in roles. That means **quotas AND recurring need**. Staying in their talent 'pipeline' is a great way to get an early jump on a newly opened role.
- Recruiters often focus on one or two areas of the business, meaning you will want to find the right one.

Great. So clearly you need to be in touch with some recruiters because they are the ones putting you in front of a hiring manger.

How to find and leverage recruiters to get a job.
1. Select a company you want to work for - or one with a job opening you want - and go to their company page.
2. Click on 'People' under their header info.
3. Search for keywords "talent", "acquisition", "people", "recruiting", "recruiter" etc. You get the idea.
4. Pick the person you think can help you. They often list the business areas they support, but if not go with someone whose title and experience roughly aligns with yours. e.g. - the head of talent & acquisition isn't hiring for an entry-level role.
5. Connect with them. You **MUST** include a note with this connection request. Something like *"Hi there - I am very interested in your company. It would be great to connect for a 10 minute chat to see if I might be a good fit; if not now then perhaps in the future. I am looking for a role in (biz area); please let me know if there is someone else on your team I should reach out to instead."*
6. **FOLLOW UP**. They may respond, they may not. They may accept the connection but nothing more. This is your time to be different than everyone else. Keep following up and get 10 min on the phone with them. If they are aloof, repeat the above steps for another recruiter at the company.

Recruiters are gatekeepers to hiring mangers. They often know enough about the field you want a job in, but not detailed specifics. All interactions with them should be high level and touch on what they look to hire for and your GENERAL skillset. Consider these interactions 'screens', not interviews.

4 - Pick Up the Damn Phone

Alright so you've spent the past week updating your profile, getting your resumes ready to go, and connecting with recruiters at all of the companies you consider desirable.

Great, now what?

Hopefully you were able to get on the phone for a quick chat with a recruiter or two. If not, take the following steps:

• Repeat step 3 *(note - you should be doing this continually until you have a gig. Then you should keep doing it after you have a gig because it's how you'll get your next gig.)*
• Pursue phone calls like your livelihood depends on it. It's not called nagging, it's called **persistence**.

Getting on the phone with recruiters and *hopefully* hiring managers is a skill you have no choice but to develop. And practice makes perfect.

The more recruiters you speak with, the more comfortable you will be. Plus, you will begin to speak like they do. Picking up on the common phrases and the way in which things are referred to.

Write down every acronym you don't know and look them up after the call. This is VERY important for when you speak with hiring managers and will give you a leg up, especially in entry-level roles. Act like you belong and you will.

But JT, I don't know what I would say! What should I talk to a recruiter about?

Now we are getting somewhere.

Calls with recruiters should accomplish the following things:

1. Inform you on open positions at the company.
2. Inform the recruiter about your strengths, skills, attitude, and whatever else you bring to the table.
3. Demonstrate your ambition, hunger, and interest.
4. Show that you are a good culture fit and can converse in a way that people find pleasant.

The conversation needs to check all of those boxes. If you aren't getting there, jump in and move it along. But don't be afraid of letting them do most of the talking. There's a lot you can learn.

Remember, **a recruiter WANTS to hire you**. They want nothing more than to check that box saying a role is filled and to move on. It's how they get out of work early on a Friday.

Your job is to make that easy on them by being informed and proactive; meaning you can help drive the conversation that you asked, ~~nagged~~ persisted, and finally pleaded for.

They should leave with your resume and an understanding of your skills. **You should leave with their direct contact information** (email and phone). And the combination of the two means following up in the future is easy.

This is what I mean by being in their 'pipeline'. Maybe you aren't a fit now or the right role isn't open. That isn't ideal but it's ok. You are planting a seed that might turn into a tree down the road.

You are also well within your rights to ask to speak with a manager in the business area you want to work in. They may balk on it, but you will likely discover a name. And a name can be used to target another head… the right head….

5 - Track & Circle Back

As you are probably discovering, managing all of these contacts and communications can become overwhelming.

To keep everything straight and to ensure you are doing your bit, it's time to create a tracking sheet. This is a minimum that you should keep and it is something you can leverage going forward. Use a Google Sheet and make the following:

Company	Contact	Phone	Email	Position	Last Contact Date	Status Notes
GameStop	Susan B Anthony	xxx-xxx-xxxx	SuzzyB@	Recruiter	4/1	No Open Roles
Enron	Chet Steadman	xxx-xxx-xxxx	Chet@	Manager	3/2	Circle Back - Possible new role in summer

The lovely thing about doing this is that you can easily filter on who you haven't contacted in a while. Periodically check in with a message on Linkedin (or their preferred channel) just to see how things are going.

These people are becoming **your functional network**. And that is important. If you can sustain this practice, then when you need something down the line you will have the ability to move fast and effectively.

Remember, networking is a two way street. You should always seek to help as much as you receive. When you sync up with recruiters down the line, always ask what positions they have to fill, indicating that you might know someone. Follow through with that and you will develop a strong relationship. This is called **network deepening**.

Of course you don't have to stop with the columns listed above. Helpful additions might include:
- Position applied for
- Application date
- Application follow up date & channel (phone, email, Linkedin, letter, etc.)
- Personable fact about them that I can draw upon to show that they are important and I can remember things

The point is to create your own system where you can manage your network. Doing so is time consuming but immensely valuable. If you are smart - and start early enough - your network will work for you when it counts.

6 - Final Thought

So there it is. Pretty simple right?

Ironically, the best thing you can do to get a job is to spend a lot of time on building a **functional network** before you need it. So along those lines, I **HIGHLY RECOMMEND** pursuing recruiter contacts, applying for jobs, and even interviewing every month. Or at least every quarter.

The worst thing you can do is sit on the sidelines, content with your current situation, right up to the moment where the wheels fall off. Maybe it'll be getting laid off or maybe it'll be a midlife crisis where you feel stuck. Whatever it is, no-one ever suffered from knowing the right people to get in the door somewhere else.

Reaching out can be intimidating and frustrating, but that's the real work. If doing that makes you scared or nervous… all the more reason to get after it and keep doing it.

Be in the habit of tweaking your resume once a year as you gain experience and chalk up accomplishments. Send snail mail letters to people if you want to stand out. Dance on your head. Do something unique!

And for the love of god, smile more. Life is short and agreeable folk tend to have an easier go in the work world. They are harder to hang up on and people want to be around them. Sometimes that's enough to overcome performance deficiency.

With that… all the best!

If you have questions, if anything is unclear, or if want to take me up on a resume or profile review just shoot me a note to the email below. Again, I hope you'll join r/uncommoners to see what else I'm working on since thats where it will appear first and it keeps me out of your inbox.

Go get 'em, Tiger!
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