



Keep records of your job search efforts

By The N.M. Department of Workforce Solutions

For the Journal

If you have applied for multiple job opportunities, keeping all your documents organized can become overwhelming. Job-hunting requires a lot of paperwork between all the job applications, resumes, and cover letters. You especially do not want to be caught off guard if a prospective employer calls to offer you an interview, and you cannot remember when you had originally applied for that position. To stay on top of your job search efforts and make the most of your time, keep records and a spreadsheet of all your job search activities.

Begin by creating a filing system that is in one centralized area, whether it be in a binder or a filing cabinet. Keep folders for copies of transcripts; a list of updated references; letters of recommendation; copies of transcripts; professional associations and personal affiliations; awards and honors; and so on. Also, keep an updated resume and general cover letter or examples of both that will help you when you work on tailoring these documents for each job opportunity. If your career field requires a portfolio or samples of work, keep a folder with copies so that they are readily available upon employer's requests and to take to interviews.

For every job you apply for, organize information by each company in a separate file. Print the job posting from online or clip the newspaper listing for your records. Keep copies of any media clippings or information about the company that you can use in your cover letter or at an interview. Keep any job application instructions, business cards, and written correspondence you receive from an employer, such receipt of job application, interview offer, etc. If you do not like keeping hard copies of documents, you can scan everything, create virtual folders by company name, and save the PDF files accordingly on your computer.

In addition to maintaining records and organized files, creating a log of job search activities is also helpful. To keep track of your job search activities, you can create your own spreadsheet with the following columns: employer's name; address; phone number; contact name; website address; and the company's hours.

Title additional columns as: title of position you applied for; date you applied for position; how you submitted your application and other required material, whether it be online, through the mail, or in person; current application status; date interviewed; type and date of follow-up communication, such as calling to check on the status of your application or sending a thank-you note after an interview; additional comments and notes; and finally, the employer's response.

You can create a handwritten spreadsheet in a notebook or via spreadsheet computer programs like Excel. Update your spreadsheet every time you apply for a job, send correspondence to the employer, complete an interview, etc. By keeping track of tasks you have accomplished, it is easier to keep an eye on your specific goals and to monitor your job search progress.

Keeping track of your paperwork, organizing all your correspondence, and maintaining a spreadsheet of your activities will help you be efficient and effective throughout your job hunt. Being organized is not only a good habit but will help you keep focused on your job search strategy.

This is a regular column written by the N.M. Department of Workforce Solutions. For more information, go to www.dws.state.nm.us.

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