

Navigating the Job Market

The landscape of job hunting is ever changing, an evolution that changes in complexion with the advent of new technologies, especially in the last decade where computers had a big say, as to how businesses were run.

Navigating the job market and securing a job will mean having the required skills to stay relevant to the needs of businesses. How does one ensure that he or she has landed the right job? Are there enough of jobs around that one can fit into, not just securing it, but performing well enough to ensure he keeps his job.

Do not just apply for a position just because it's 'popular' and pays well. Do some soul searching and ask yourself, do you fit into the job requirements? To make matters simple, I would dissect the requirement of a job into 2 segments, nature and nurture. The natural characteristics of a person and/or his conditioning into adulthood, in a way can determine the type of job he can comfortably fit in. For example, being in the service industry requires one to be patient, people oriented and a sense of fulfilment when you see others pleased with the service you rendered. In short, the natural characteristic of a person who happens to be patient helps him fit into a job where patience is the very crux towards high performance. I believe nature has a big say here. Nurture, would be the training and skills he needs to help him execute the job better. This would be the technical aspect of the job requirement. Therefore ensure

that your characteristics correspond with the job before applying, and that you have the skills (or upgrade yourself to acquire skills if needed).

Accepting any job just because it pays well or there is an abundance of it can be detrimental if one is not able to resonate with its values, and objectives. For example, a Catholic Doctor would find it very difficult to perform an abortion, as his values and upbringing would contradict the objective of an abortion, given his religious beliefs were strongly entrenched in him. He would therefore not be able to perform that task with conviction... so it is best that he be a Doctor that does other duties and not abortion.

Anticipating which industry is poised to grow would be a big plus when jobseekers decide to upgrade their skills. In Singapore, electronics and electrical manufacturing may see a decline as emerging markets like China and India can offer cheaper skilled workforce that would entice Multi National Corporations to move their operations there. In addition, these manufacturing firms are export driven, which has lost its momentum due to the global financial meltdown. Pharmaceutical, bioscience and the service industries are expected to grow (albeit at a slower pace) as Singapore targets the growing tourism market. The up and coming integrated resorts would require a large pool of personnel to fill up its service, security, gaming and other support vacancies. According to a straits

times report on 1st Nov, page A-10, the service industry was the best performing industry, which added over 36,200 jobs for its third quarter report.

Given the current outlook, the service and related industries look like a better option for job seekers. As a HR professional, I urge job seekers to identify jobs that their characteristics are in sync with and to upgrade their skills to suite the industry that is expected to grow.



*Credit to: Martin Gabriel
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