

Top 5 Critical Steps to Get A Great IT Job

eBook version



This eBook is going to teach you the 5 critical steps you must take to get an IT job!

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INSTRUCTOR PAUL?

Instructor Paul is an IT professional who works as a full time senior systems administrator during the day and I create instructional material and online courses in the evenings!

He has taught over 100,000 students through his courses and has over 7,500 course reviews.

In fact, this eBook is based on a video course which you can check out by clicking here.

You can reach Instructor Paul on his website at instructorpaul.com or by email at atpaul@instructorpaul.com.



Instructor Paul has been working in the IT (information technology) for over a decade. He has an associate degree in IT and currently holds a Security+ certification.

At his day job he engineers computer networks based on customer requirements. It could involve integrating new services into an existing network or building an entire network from scratch. This would include planning, purchasing hardware/software, assembling hardware, installing and configuring servers and network gear and hardening (securing) these devices.

A few of the key technologies he enjoys working on are Hyper-V/ESXI, Windows/Linux, Cisco/HP network equipment, EMC SANs (storage area networks), AWS (Amazon Web Services), pSQL and MySQL database administration, scripting and many more technologies that would be too long and boring to list here...

A quick message from Instructor Paul

Hey! Below you can find my contact information. I would love to connect with you personally! So if you would like feel free to email me, go to my website and join my mailing list (if you haven't already), or enroll in one of my video courses.

I started teaching video courses because I wanted to have an impact and it helps me out tremendously to hear what *you* are struggling with, so I can tailor my courses to solve your problems!

Thanks for your interest in my training material! Let me know how I can improve it =)

Respectfully,
Instructor Paul



EMAIL ME

I would love to hear from you! If you would like to send me a message you can reach me at the email address below:

paul@instructorpaul.com



WEBSITE

Visit my website and join my mailing list to follow me and my IT video courses

instructorpaul.com



COURSES

Visit my website to find IT video courses. In fact, this eBook is based on one of those video courses.

instructorpaul.com/courses

eBook Overview

The IT (Information Technology) industry is a very high paying career field. With the rate that technology is advancing and evolving, you can be sure that the IT field is not going to disappear anytime soon and neither are the professionals who work in the IT field.

The IT field is perceived as a very difficult industry to get started in because people often cannot get an IT job without IT experience, but they are unable to get IT experience without getting an IT job. This catch 22 discourages many people from putting in the work required to get their first solid IT job.

With this eBook I am going to help you understand the proven steps that you must take in order to get an IT job in today's market.

There is no doubt that if you don't pay special attention to each of these five steps you will have a very difficult time securing a great IT job so make sure you read this eBook carefully and put each step into practice in your own job searches.

Step 1

Get IT Experience

The very first thing you must do before you can get an IT job is get IT experience. If you have read my eBook or taken my video course on "[How to Build Your Own Windows Server IT Lab from Home](#)," you will understand that you *can* gain valuable IT experience at home. Remember, any work you do with computers is valuable no matter if you're being paid for it or not

The best way to get IT experience is to simply take online courses on a specific subject. Find course that teach skills – not theory. For example, if you want to get an entry level IT job, you should look at job descriptions and see what the requirements. If you see keywords like "Active Directory" or "Group Policy", you should take courses that will teach you how to use those tools, so you can add them to your resume. Of course, [I teach those exact courses](#)...just saying...

Another great way to gain experience is to volunteer your time at your local library, church, school, or various office buildings. After all, if it's a big building then they likely have computers and someone will need to work on those computers. Why not you as a volunteer?

My career when I volunteered at my local church which I think is the easiest way to get started. I brought in a desktop computer, wireless hotspot and setup a streaming server that broadcasted their services to the internet.

This required me to answer phone calls and troubleshoot user's issues. It was great experience! At the time I thought I couldn't add the experience to my resume because I came up with the idea and I wasn't being paid, but one of the people there said I should add it to my resume anyway – so I did and it was key experience later on when I got my first full-time position.

A lot of big companies also offer both paid and unpaid internships which usually don't require any job experience but also require you to be enrolled in an IT related college program. I went to a

community college and that allowed me to get a paid internship (although it was over an hour drive from my house).

A key point I want to make here is that I continued my volunteer work while I worked the internship, and my volunteer work is what allowed me to get my first fulltime IT job. In fact, they substituted a bachelor's degree for the 4 years of volunteer IT experience I gained at that church. This is why I say that **experience is experience** no matter how it is gained.

Exercise

List three actionable ways that you can gain IT experience this week

Step 2

Prepare Your Resume

Regardless of how you gain experience, make sure you write ANY IT related thing that you do on a resume. It's a great idea to download a sample resume so you can start to document your experience as you learn new skills.

Make sure your bullet points are detailed enough so that you can talk for two or three minutes about what you did when you are asked to explain a bullet point at an interview.

I cannot stress this enough. Be prepared for someone to go line-by-line over your resume. If you can't talk for two or three minutes for EACH bullet point, then you are not ready for a job interview. The ability to talk about your experience is what will convince the interviewers that you are the right candidate for the job.

Once you have a resume, share it with your friends, family, recruiters or other people you know who work in the IT field. This will help you gain valuable feedback and fix any grammatical errors that always seem to happen (I'm sure there are plenty in this eBook).

Step 3

How to Apply to Jobs

If you are unemployed or you want to get a better job, then your job right now is to find a job. You are a professional job hunter, so treat it like a job! Dedicate a set amount of time each day for you to apply to jobs.

We both know that it is a real pain applying to jobs over and over again as they all seem to require you to register a new account and you have to use a different password because they have a different password security policy...but this is something you HAVE to do if you want to get a job.

Apply to at least 10-15 jobs each day

Here is a small list of the most popular websites that you can use to start looking for IT related jobs:

- Indeed.com
- Monster.com
- CareerBuilder.com
- ClearanceJobs.com (if you have a security clearance)
- Ziprecruiter.com
- Snagajob.com
- LinkedIn.com (connect to and message recruiters)

Visit each of these every day and setup email alerts for jobs within 100 miles of where you live. Why 100 miles? Because some companies will allow you to work from home or work at an alternate (closer) office.

It's also not a bad idea to setup a new email address just for these job alerts. That way when you are ready to start applying to jobs you can log into your new email address and just go through each email applying to jobs as you receive them. This is easier than using your personal inbox that will get cluttered with friends sharing cat videos with you. The key is to stay focused!

IMPORTANT: Apply to jobs that you aren't qualified for!

The last four jobs I have gotten I wasn't fully qualified for. In fact, the last two jobs I got I didn't even have 50% of the qualifications.

When a hiring manager creates a job listing, they put down everything under the sun that they can think of that would be a "nice to have". In fact, companies are rarely EVER able to find a candidate that has all the requirements.

Believe it or not it is a very bad idea for you to take a job that you are fully qualified for because there will be no room for growth. Hiring managers know this as well.

You will be hired based on if you match most or some of the job requirements and how well you do in the interview as far as friendliness, punctuality, enthusiasm, confidence, communication skills, and ability to convince them that you are a good fit for the team.

Keep in mind that applying to jobs will be a LONG process before you finally get a call for an interview. That is why I say at least apply to 10-15 jobs. It took me an entire year of constantly applying before I was able to get my first IT internship – and I almost gave up several times.

Keep aggressively repeating steps 1-3 until you get an interview.

Step 4

Good Job Interviewing

Whether you have finally got an interview or not, it is time to start preparing. The first thing I would like you to do is to practice your “story”. Imagine answering the question, “so [your first name], tell me about yourself”.

This is the time for you to start talking about your experience. I like to start this by saying something along the lines of “I began my career as a volunteer at my local church doing Systems Administration...”

I then go through my resume highlighting my experience. The great thing about learning on your own time or volunteering is that you will be perceived as very self-motivated. That is a huge positive that you will have over others.

Your “story” should ideally last about 15 minutes (depending on how much experience you have). You need to practice answering the “Tell me about your-self” in an engaging and friendly manner. Do it in front of people or a mirror if you can – this will improve your chances of getting the job tremendously.

Of course, you should have a 2-3 minute explanation memorized for each line on your resume and this will greatly help you with your story. Prepare to answer those awkward questions like “what is your greatest weakness?”

It’s a good idea to research the most common interview questions and practice answering them. **Remember that interviewing is a skill and you need to become a great interviewer!** Researching common interview questions is a great way to improve your interviewing skills.

Research the company, interview location, and memorize the job description. Plan on arriving at the interview 45-30 minutes early. This will help you if there is bad traffic or you can’t find the office building. Thankfully with Google street view, you shouldn’t have issues with directions. Also google will allow you to guess how long it will take to arrive at the interview from your house at a specific time.

Arriving so early not only allows you to avoid being late, but you can practice your “story” while you are waiting in the car. Try to walk into the office building and notify the front desk that you are here for the interview 10-15 minutes before scheduled.

When you are in the interview, do NOT appear nervous. Remember that everyone gets nervous if they are unprepared. You will be shocked at how well you will do when you have gone overboard when preparing. It will almost be easy! When interviewing becomes easy you will make a great impression on potential employers.

Step 5

Negotiating Your Salary

After you go through several interviews you will eventually be contacted by the employer and told they want to give you an offer. A lot of times before this they will try to find out how much you are currently being paid. They use this as leverage to under pay you. When you are asked about salary requirements, you can counter the question with your own by asking what the salary range is for the position.

Every company has a salary range for a position but they usually don't like to share it. You will usually hear it depends on experience. If they won't talk numbers then you shouldn't either. Try to be the last person to bring up an exact number.

When you are given a salary range, ask for the higher end of the range. For example, if you are told that a job pays 70-90k, say that you were looking for 85-95k.

Never lie about your current income. This can come back to haunt you. In fact, you could be fired if your employer hires you and later confirms your salary from your last job and finds out you lied.

When you are first starting out in the IT field (getting your first paid IT job), **do NOT** be picky about the salary. In fact, I wouldn't even try to negotiate the salary unless it was less than 35-40k. Of course, this depends on where you live – I live in pretty close to DC so the cost of living is very high. In some parts of the US (and the world for that matter) 35-40k is a lot of money.

When it comes to your first job, the experience is more important than how much money you will make.

Conclusion

The job hunting process is an up and down experience that can be exciting one minute and discouraging the next. Remember to work hard at finding your next job and it will eventually happen for you.

It's likely not going to happen for you in the first two weeks of searching...or even two months, but if you stay persistent it WILL pay off!



EMAIL ME

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