



## **Be a Career Activist, Not a Job Seeker**

*For Job Seekers*

Most of the people who find themselves in transition these days accept a descriptive label only an employer could love. They allow themselves to be called a “job seeker.” Indeed, many actually think of themselves that way. They are a supplicant for work.

Job seekers stand in long lines at career fairs waiting patiently for thirty seconds with a recruiter who’s going to talk to two or three hundred other supplicants during the event. They go to corporate career sites and follow the directions for job seekers who are one of several hundred who will apply for each opening posted on the site. And, they join hundreds of other job seekers who pore over the jobs posted on job boards and social media sites every day.

Now, there’s absolutely nothing wrong with attending career fairs, visiting corporate career sites and using job boards and social media sites. But, here’s the hard truth: if you let yourself be seen by recruiters and employers as just “one of the herd,” if the only way you try to stand out is with a couple of paragraphs on a resume that may get 15 seconds of attention when it’s reviewed, the odds of your being hired are slim and none.

So, what should you do?

Stop acting like you’re a supplicant for work – a job seeker – and re-imagine yourself as a success in your field – a “career activist.” As I describe in my book, *The Career Activist Republic*, career activists have several defining attributes:

- They never ever look for a job.
- They never ever let a gap appear in their resume.

and

- They never ever think of themselves as an employee.

Let’s take a quick look at each of those traits.

### **They never ever look for a job**

Career activists never ever look for a job, but they are always on the lookout for a career advancement opportunity. They do their homework and seek out employers with the right culture and leadership values – as well as job openings – for them. Then, they plot out and execute a campaign to get to know

and establish their occupational credentials with as many employees as possible in each organization. They take action to transform themselves from a stranger standing in line at a career fair or on a Web-site into a colleague who is recognized as someone with the potential to be an effective coworker.

### **They never ever let a gap appear in their resume**

Career activists never let unemployment create a gap in their resume because they never stop working on the development of their talent. They have enough respect for their talent – their inherent capacity for excellence – to devote themselves to its continuous improvement. No matter how many years of experience they have, no matter how senior they've become in their field, no matter how many max performance appraisal scores they received in the past, they are always in school or training to upgrade themselves. They take action to transform employers' view of them from a job seeker with their hat in hand hoping for work to a career activist with talent they have to hire.

### **They never ever think of themselves as an employee**

An employee works for an organization; a career activist works for themselves, but is employed by someone else. They believe they are a "person of talent," so being hired is simply a way of leasing their talent to the organization. A person of talent brings their expertise to work with them every single day and uses it to perform at their peak. They are someone an employer can count on to do superior work day-in, day-out. They take action to transform others' perception of them from a person who has the experience to do a job competently into one who has the commitment and capability to excel at it.

Thanks for reading,

Peter

Visit me at [Weddles.com](http://Weddles.com)

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