

THE OFFICE

Beware the job-search minefield

Looking for a new post while still at your old one takes skill, writes **Gillian Nalletamby**.

Finding a new job is hard work. It's like going into battle – a battle of wits, that is. Job searching takes discipline, determination and just a little bit of stealth and cunning. Here are some tips from a trained veteran to get Operation Job Search under way and get you job ready.

Start staggering your work hours or alternating your shifts so when you're asked to go for an interview, it won't look out of place to be turning up at work at 10am or leaving at 4pm. Keep 'em guessing and on their toes. Develop mysterious illnesses that require a lot of specialist appointments and keep your flexi and annual leave days free. You can only have so many fillings before your boss starts questioning your hygiene or wondering whether you're homeless. Like a soldier in training, you need to be prepared for all eventualities.

Make sure you have voicemail, always put your mobile phone on silent and never pick up your phone during work hours. It's a potential hand grenade. You can't let your boss even smell the scent of an interview.

Call interviewers back at a convenient time to you. Don't do what I did and dial a random missed call I thought might be the hot boy I met on Saturday night, only to find I was on the receiving end of a 20-minute phone interview in the middle of a noisy food court. Despite the call coming from a telecommunications company that



prides itself on saying yes, I got a resounding no. I can still hear it reverberating in my ears.

Make sure your interview suits are dry-cleaned and ready for action. If you work in a casual office culture, like I do, you know if you wear a suit then you might as well tattoo "I'm looking for another job" on your forehead. You need to master the art of camouflage and quickly. Start alternating your jeans and sneakers for more traditional work wear. A casual T-shirt teamed with black suit pants can quickly be turned into a bona fide interview outfit with the matching suit jacket. Done well, there should only be a short transitional period, long before your workmates even look

up from updating their Facebook pages and notice a difference.

Make sure your referees are primed in case they have forgotten who you are. There is no need to remind them you were the one who emailed the Hoff joke around the office with the virus that shut down the company for two days. If an interviewer says they are going to ring your referees, email them the job description so they can tailor (notice I didn't say lie) your skills and experience for the role.

Start printing examples of your work on the company's brand-new colour printer outside of work hours in preparation for your escape. Don't feel guilty at this point about using company

resources to further your career. Teamwork and solidarity is a myth cooked up by some change consultant in the early 1980s. You have to look after number one and arm yourself with all the artillery you can get in the financial crisis. Take no prisoners.

And remember, all's fair in love and war.

When Gillian Nalletamby is not camouflaged in khakis and job searching, she blogs about fashion, lifestyle and women's issues on her blog, 30isthewblack.com.

Is there an aspect of office life that makes you laugh, cry or simply drives you crazy? Readers are invited to submit 550-word articles for publication in The Office to theoffice@fairfax.com.au.

SALARY SPOTLIGHT

BAR ATTENDANT/BARISTA



There are 67,500 bar attendants and baristas working across the country, mixing and serving alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks for patrons in licensed establishments or in coffee shops and cafes. It is possible to work in this industry without formal qualifications, as new staff members will often receive hands-on training. Alternatively, you can become a bar attendant through an apprenticeship in hospitality (operations). Depending on the liquor licensing requirements of the venue you are working in, you may need a Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) certificate. RSA short courses are widely offered in Victoria by TAFE institutes and Registered Training Organisations. Shift work is common in this industry, as is night and weekend work. Full-time bar attendants earn an average wage of \$700 a week. **Effie Mann**

Sources: myfuture.edu.au; joboutlook.gov.au

MyCareer
com.au

For more salary advice visit mycareer.com.au/salary-centre.

Occupational Therapy/Physiotherapy/Speech Pathology/ Social Work/Psychology/Case Management/Group Assistants

WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Northcott Disability Services is an innovative and dynamic organisation that supports more than 6,000 people with disabilities and their families through 80 programs operating from over 30 sites across NSW and ACT.

Due to the continuation of planned growth, we are seeking a number of highly motivated people to contribute to a range of new and exciting programs located across NSW:

Parramatta, Hornsby, Penrith, Liverpool, Campbelltown, Newcastle, Central Coast, Wollongong, Coffs Harbour, Tamworth, Ballina, Wagga, Queanbeyan and Dubbo.

The new programs include:

- Early Childhood Autism Service

- Early Start Support Program (pre-school children)
- Computer Assistive Technology Services
- Intensive Family Support
- State Wide Mentoring Service
- Therapy programs for metropolitan, rural and country locations

We are looking for all levels of experience, so if you thrive in a dynamic team environment which encourages professional development – we want to hear from you.

If you are a country based therapist or would like to relocate to a regional centre, we would also love to hear from you.



Please go to our website: WWW.NORTHCOTT.COM.AU and click on "Employment Opportunities". Alternatively you can contact our friendly HR team on (02) 9890 0100 to discuss the benefits package we offer and the exciting career opportunities we have.

