Researching a Company

Why research companies? Elementary my dear Watson!

1). Job search efforts are more effective if you target or match your goals with the needs of an organization. You must research organizations to find out what those needs and employment requirements are.

2). Job growth nationally is occurring in smaller organizations. It may take more effort to identify these organizations since they are not 'name brand' or may not have as great a recognition in the marketplace as larger, public organizations.

3). An interview is enhanced by the candidate’s knowledge of the employer. Researching an organization will give you an edge compared to the next candidate, guaranteed!

4). By being very familiar with information a company provides about itself on the Internet or in print form, a potential interviewee can predict possible interview questions. For example, a company describes itself as a "high customer service organization which prizes relationships with clients on a first name basis." You may be asked the typical interview question, "What are your weaknesses?" If you cannot ever put a name with a face, you might reply, "I know the value of recognizing people by name and that's a goal of mine. I am reading a book on tips for remembering names and I want to see how well I can do."

5). Also, there are companies which will clearly ask, "What do you know about our company?" Researching the organization will give you a ready answer.

6). To show integrity and respect for everyone's time, it is wise to research a company even before you apply. If a company's mission is contrary to your values, why take the interviewer's time, as well as yours, for a formal interview?

What do you need to know about an employer?

- How did the organization get started? What is the product or service it provides? Who are the customers?
- What kinds of positions does this firm offer? What is the hiring process? Do they use an unusual type of interview?
- Where is it located? Are there other offices? How many employees and locations are represented? Do they have international operations (or operate in international locations)?
- How is the company doing - is it competitive? Is it growing? Who are its competitors? How do they compete with their competitors (do you have something to offer to enhance their "edge")?
- What kind of company culture does it have? Is it strictly a formal/ suit environment, or are flexible attire and schedules available? How are employees supervised and managed?
- Does it have a training program or career pathing information?
- What are the priorities in terms of long range organizational goals?

Advisors in Academic & Career Services are available to assist you in researching organizations

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