

Job Preferences - - - Quick Guide

Creating and judging relevant job features to enhance career self-management

Before you take that first step on the job search, you have to know what it is you want and what you don't want.

Throughout our daily lives, we are constantly listing criteria in order to explore choices - - - which movie to see, what restaurant to eat at, selecting a wardrobe, what to have for lunch, or planning a trip. Whether dealing with these or some of the more involved processes like buying a home, which car to purchase or what job to take, one usually starts with a list of: **must have, would be nice, not essential, and do not want.**

Your job search rarely begins in a dark hole since you have a good idea of the type of position and the fundamental characteristics that would please you and displease you. For instance, you may not want to work where there is a risk of mould or live beside a coal fired generating plant, or eat dinner where the smells of a rendering plant permeate the air - - - but you do have to express your concerns and prioritize them.

Careers occur in a wide choice of work environments. For example, an engineer can work for a large or small company, be self-employed, teach high school, college or university, or be a government employee. The

basic education is much the same for each career. What varies most is the work environment.

Consider the assortment of working places available: from the quiet, sterile, sophisticated, well-paced regimen of a large accounting firm; to a small, partitioned office at the front of an extrusion plant with its array of noises and interruptions. The locale ... in the centre of the business district with restaurants, shopping, and transportation close by, or in an industrial pocket in the suburbs where you may have to travel by bus, or go some distance to eat.

On a casual basis, each time you encounter a place that you think you would or wouldn't like to work, write down your reasons for or against. Then to manage your job search from the ground up, start by creating a list and prioritizing important features of a job.

Unfortunately, many of the preferred aspects of a job are not likely present at the time you would like. You may decide either to wait for the ideal position or accept a position that encompasses some or most of your wants, needs and likes.

**This is the new career reality:
Coping with and adjusting to
changing conditions as they occur.**

Features of the job

What is a job to you? Is it a position, career, vocation, task, role, calling, situation, craft, mission, pursuit, art, specialty, profession, post, employment, function, or a set of duties and skills? Each of the preceding words evokes a somewhat different meaning. There may be other vitally important features of a job that are not described by these words. For example some people need mobility, variety, or money.

Investigate critical questions about the expectations and features of a given position and where you might be willing to compromise. For example, a job that demands travel out of town on a regular basis necessitates being separated from family, friends, home and all that they represent to you. Ask a number of

people their impressions about job related travel and judge whether it is a viable feature of a job for you. Repeat this for other important aspects that you list such as the 50 points on the reverse side. Then prioritize your wants according to:

Must have	1
Would be nice	2
Not essential	3
Do not want	NO

The comments beside your set of characteristics more clearly define your needs and wants. Having a good idea about job-related preferences is one of the more important job search tasks to be concluded prior to researching potential employers.



Job environment preferences worksheet

#	Criteria	Priority	Comment
1.	Preferred function < >		
2.	Type of industry		
3.	Benefits / pension		
4.	Perquisites (parking, memberships, tuition)		
5.	Signing bonus		
6.	Employment contract		
7.	Product or service		
8.	Salary / bonus / commission / car allowance / perqs		
9.	Public / Private / family run company		
10.	Sick Days		
11.	Funds available / budget / company stability/strength		
12.	Leadership / Board of Directors		
13.	Accountabilities / Autonomy		
14.	Key responsibilities of the position		
15.	Size of company		
16.	Corporate philosophy/ atmosphere / values / culture		
17.	Title		
18.	Access to facilities / Health Club / Child Care Center		
19.	Access to transportation / parking		
20.	Multitasking/ challenging work		
21.	Retraining / crosstraining		
22.	Job sharing		
23.	Status of the position / respect / power		
24.	Location / distance to work		
25.	Advancement potential / mobility		
26.	Hours per day / split shifts / flexible start/end time / shifts		
27.	Child care facilities		
28.	Days per week / days of the week / part-time / full-time		
29.	Management style / leadership style		
30.	Holidays		
31.	Pressure / stress inherent on the job		
32.	Contribution by fellow team members		
33.	Administrative support		
34.	Learning/ development / upgrading		
35.	Routine / pace		
36.	Personalities		
37.	Energy / enthusiasm of staff		
38.	Commitment to excellence		
39.	Accessibility / diversity / hiring practices		
40.	Union / non-union		
41.	Office layout (separate offices / open concept)		
42.	Complexity / variety		
43.	Competition		
44.	Independence		
45.	Organization / planning / creativity		
46.	Knowledgeable management		
47.	Technical advances / technology availability		
48.	Marketing and sales support		
49.	Knowledge / information		
50.	Reporting structure / corporate structure		