

Evaluate Skills, Then Seek Job

By Bernadine Gilpin

Even in this tough-time economy, there is a real payoff in connecting what you like to do with certain fields that have expanding jobs opportunities.

Electronics technicians, computer operators, programmers, system analysts, medical technologists, record keeping technicians, technical report writers, service workers, cooks, accountants, engineers, security, custodial and clerical personnel are those that occupy the top demand fields of the 80s.

If you like to assemble, build, fix or repair, think about electronics, service worker, engineering or custodial fields. If you like to keep records, balance, organize, consider clerical or word processing. If inventing, designing, research and writing appeal to you, engineering and technical report writing are fields to check into.

People succeed in jobs if they are interested in what they are doing. One of the first things a career counselor asks a person who is looking for work is, "What do you like to do?"

If the response indicates they like to be active and move around a lot it is obvious that a desk job would be hard for them. If they like to pull things apart and see what makes them tick, it is apparent that routine tasks with the same thing every day would bore them. The kinds of things people do for fun need to be considered when making job choices.

Once a person ties their interests to what is looking good in the job market, the next step is to look into specific jobs, getting all the information available. How does one do this? Visit someone who is doing that line of work and ask questions. This is called an information interview and there's a world of good job information awaiting the person who asks the right questions at such an interview.

When making an appointment, ask for a specific amount of time — say, 15 or 30 minutes. The person chosen to interview should have a job that ties in with one's own interests. This will make it easier for the job-seeker to show enthusiasm and ask the right questions.

Dress well for an information interview. One should be clean, classic and conservative in appearance. Not only will this give one a good feeling about oneself, but it signals the possible employer that the job-seeker respects the importance of the occasion enough to put his or her best foot forward. Every person should be treated as a potential employer, whether one wants to work for them or not.

Carry a clipboard or notebook to take notes. Jot down the information-giver's name and some questions before the interview. This makes one look well-organized and serious about getting job information.

Since only a short time may be allotted, ask only questions that are appropriate to the interview and those that are most important. Ask how the person in the job got training for it. Ask about the company. Ask what advice that person could give to someone interested in their line of work.

Know the job title and duties of the person being interviewed. Ask the owner of a business different questions than one would ask the shop foreman. Often, the higher the person is in an organization the better treatment the job-seeker will get. People in the higher ranking positions have learned the value of practicing good people skills.

Be a good listener. The interview is aimed at getting information, not broadcasting it. Stick to the pre-arranged time frame. If the information-giver does not realize the time is up, remind her or him. If they offer to spend more time then or later, take it. The more time spent with an information-giver, the more one will be remembered as a courteous information-seeker when a job comes up.

Ask toward the end of the interview if the source knows of anyone else who could offer more good information. Ask if the information-giver's name may be used when other people are called upon. Names of known people open doors.

Always thank the source in person and follow-up with a thank you note. If the source may be of future help in one's search for a job, the job-seeker should enclose a copy of his or her resume.

After the interview, make a few brief notes of impressions, the people met, ideas to pursue and people to contact. A fresh idea or good contact is a rich pay-off for the time spent in an information interview.

Once interviews are over and worksites have been visited, it's time to look into training. Many of today's in-demand jobs require special training. Community colleges have counselors available at no cost who can discuss career goals and training programs.

There are no age limits or requirements of high school or grade school diplomas to take courses at a local community college. Financial assistance is available to people with low incomes and those who have had a drastic change of financial condition. The colleges administer free tests to help decide which classes are best for the individual.

Scholarships in Technical

Fields Abound

"Thousands of students who might not otherwise be able to attend college will now be able to do so."

That was the message delivered in March by Col. John A. Milani at the annual conference of Historically Black Colleges.

Milani told conference participants that the "Army ROTC will make additional four-, three- and two-year scholarships available to qualified students." In addition, he continued, "scholarships will be made available specifically for students working toward degrees in engineering and other technical fields."

All ROTC scholarships cover full tuition, required fees and an amount for books and supplies, and they provide a subsistence allowance of up to \$1,000 each school year they are in effect.

Four-year scholarships are awarded on a worldwide competitive basis to U.S. citizens who will be entering college as freshmen. The three- and two-year scholarships are awarded competitively to students who are already enrolled in college.

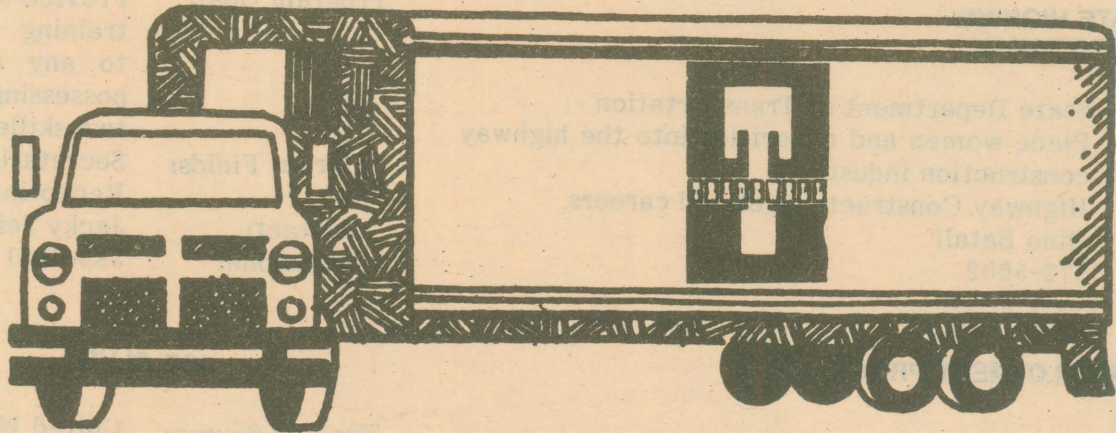
Of the students who received four-year scholarships in school year 1982-83, 62 percent were varsity letter winners, 53 percent were National Honor Society members, 21 percent were varsity team captains and 25 percent held a class or student body office. Ninety-nine percent were in the top 25 percent of their class.

Unlike many other scholarships, ROTC scholarships are awarded solely on a young person's merit, not on his or her parent's income.

"Army ROTC scholarships are a terrific opportunity — for two reasons," stated Col. William Tinsley, coordinator of the national Army ROTC advertising program. "For one thing, they offer a chance for students to pursue their educational goals in situations where money is tight — and given the cost of college these days, when isn't it?"

"For another, we see the scholarship program as a way to develop top flight talent for the Army while facilitating quality education for students. In that regard, with ROTC, everybody wins," he said.

A supermarket in job opportunities



Happy job hunting your:

TRADEWELL