

Know Yourself

Finding the right job takes more than luck and tenacity. Sure, hard work is a requirement for any successful career, but you're much more likely to succeed if you find a company that's a good long-term fit for your career goals. It's a popular saying, but it's very true: If you find a job you love, you'll never work a day in your life.

The most successful careers often start with something you're passionate about. And to find a good match for your skills and interests in the workforce, you've got to look first inside yourself.

• GET HONEST FEEDBACK

Sometimes it's hard to see yourself in the same light that others see you. Ask your friends, family and co-workers how you present yourself professionally and what you can do to improve the image you portray.

It's a tough conversation to have — and certainly not one you can have with just anyone — but it can help you get insights that you never would have thought of on your own.

You can also practice job interview skills with another person who can serve as your coach. They should be someone you trust to give you honest advice about what you need to work on. It might be how you speak, how



you look or how you use body language, but clear feedback from another person — preferably someone who is a good example of professionalism themselves — can be very valuable.

• POINT OUT YOUR PROGRESS

Employers are probably going to ask about your weaknesses. Be prepared not only with a good, clear answer, but also with concrete ways you've overcome your personality

flaws.

They don't just want to know what kind of skills they're getting, but the methods you take to improve your value to the company, too.

For example, if you're a naturally shy person, you can bring up concrete stories about steps you've taken to communicate better with your co-workers. Maybe you volunteered to organize a local fundraiser or took a speech class in college.

While no employee is perfect, employers do want to see things you're doing to improve on your skill set.

• KNOW WHERE YOU SHINE

If you're really good at one particular skill — such as organization, project planning or creativity — don't be shy about pointing that out and giving specific examples of how it has helped you in similar jobs in the past. You need to truly understand

where your strengths lie and be able to articulate that clearly and confidently when given the chance.

Some people might see that as bragging, but it's perfectly appropriate in a job interview. If you're good at something, don't be shy about it. Bring it up. Show your potential employer what you bring to the table. By knowing yourself, you'll be much more likely to find a job that makes you happy for the long term.