

DETERMINE WHERE YOU ARE GETTING HUNG-UP IN YOUR JOB SEARCH:

If you can honestly answer “yes” to most of the answers below, you’re doing the right things and should keep at it.

If most of your answers are “no” or “not really” or “kind of,” it’s time to double-down on your job search, invest more time and energy into the process, and concentrate on any areas where you didn’t answer a resounding “yes!”

If you’re applying but not getting any callbacks or job interviews:

- Are you targeting your job search to specific jobs/careers that you are most interested in?
- Have you made a list of large and small companies for which you’d most like to work?
- Are you tailoring every resume and cover letter you send out to be specific for each job/company?
- Have you networked with friends, colleagues, and other professionals to learn more about possible job openings?
- Do you fill out online applications completely and with information and answers that will “beat” the application system?
- Have you proofread your application materials for grammar and spelling, and have you asked others to proofread them too?
- Are you following up on applications to make sure employers have received them (either by email or phone)? And to reiterate your interest?
- Are you active in professional associations or other networking groups?
- Have you asked people in your network, if they work for a company you’ve applied to, or know someone at a company you want to work for, to put in a good word for you?
- Have you had your resume reviewed by a professional?
- Are you sending a cover letter (or cover email) with every application?
- Are your application materials free from sounding angry, frustrated, desperate, or otherwise negative?
- Rather than applying to everything you are qualified for, are you spending time on jobs that you truly want, crafting unique resumes and cover letters for each?
- Is your phone’s voicemail box able to accept messages and is your voicemail greeting professional?
- Is your email box able to receive new messages?
- Is your email address professional and does it contain your name?
- Are your social media profiles (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) private so employers cannot see them, or have you made them completely professional-looking?
- Do you have any professional online presence such as a LinkedIn profile or a professional portfolio?
- Have you used social media in your job search?
- Are you applying to jobs as soon as they are posted rather than waiting days or weeks to apply?
- Do you follow job application instructions explicitly?

If you’re getting phone (or first-round) interviews, but not second-round invitations:

- Have you practiced phone interviewing?
- Do you have a dedicated space where you are free from interruption and background noise to conduct your phone interview?
- Have you researched the company to learn as much as you can before the interview?
- Do you practice answering job interview questions out-loud?
- Are you smiling while speaking over the phone?
- Are you keeping your answers positive and refraining from speaking ill of past employers, coworkers, companies, or experiences?
- Are you inquiring about the interview process moving forward, and when you can expect to hear from them again?
- Are you sending a thank-you email or note right after the interview, no matter how short the interview was?
- Are you not only talking about what you’ve done, but what you can and will do for the company if awarded the job?
- If asked about salary, do you give them an appropriate range and let them know that you’re flexible as to the exact number?
- Is your phone connection strong and do you sound clear on the other end of the phone?
- Are you giving more than short, one-or-two-word answers?
- Are you comfortable with silence and able to stop yourself from talking on and on?

- ___ Do you make it clear what your biggest strengths are and how you'll be an asset to the company?
- ___ Do you demonstrate that you've researched the company by speaking about what you've learned?
- ___ Are you enthusiastic and upbeat with your responses?

If you're getting final-round interviews, but not getting offers:

- ___ Do you send a thank-you email or note to everyone who interviewed you immediately after the interview is over?
- ___ In your thank-you, do you reiterate your qualifications for the position and clear up anything that didn't come out right during the interview?
- ___ Do you prepare a few examples of ideas you have for the position and talk about them during the interview?
- ___ Are you enthusiastic and upbeat with your responses?
- ___ Do you try to differentiate yourself from other candidates?
- ___ Do you demonstrate what you've learned by researching the company in your answers?
- ___ Can you tell the interviewer(s) specifically why you want to work for their company?
- ___ When answering questions like, "Where do you see yourself in five years?", do you give the impression that you want to work for their company?
- ___ Have you prepared specific examples of how you can contribute?
- ___ When speaking about your weaknesses, are you choosing a real weakness and telling them how you are already working to correct it?
- ___ Are you making regular eye contact and smiling during the interview?
- ___ Have you prepared (and asked) thoughtful questions about the company, your potential coworkers, and your potential responsibilities?
- ___ Do you ask if there is anything else they'd like to know about you before the interview is over?
- ___ Do you bring extra copies of your resume to hand out to multiple interviewers?
- ___ Are you letting your personality come through in your responses, body language, and mannerisms?
- ___ Are you inquiring about the interview process moving forward, and when you can expect to hear from them again?
- ___ If possible, are you bringing examples of your work with you to show to interviewers?
- ___ Do you bring a list of at least three references who can speak well about you as a professional and employee and leave it with the interviewers?
- ___ Do you ask your references for their help ahead of time, and send them a copy of the job description so they know what you're applying for?
- ___ Do you provide your references with a copy of your resume and give them specific ideas of what to talk about should they be called by a potential employer?
- ___ Have you asked your references if they've heard from potential employers yet?