



Summer JOB Tips...



For some teens, summer is a time to relax and hit the beach. For others, summer means seeking seasonal work to pay for car insurance, college tuition and leisure activities. Summer jobs have even become a way for teens to help alleviate the financial hardship and economic instability of their families.

The economy may be rebounding, but unemployment remains high - not good news for young people in the job market. According to Andrew Sum at the Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University, the number of 16-19 year olds landing a summer job this year is expected to drop below last summer's record low of 28.5 percent. The reality is that teens will be facing stiff competition from unemployed workers of all ages for a limited number of summer jobs.

For more than 80 years, Junior Achievement of New York (JA New York) has built programs and curriculum around workforce readiness - provided free to New York City and Long Island schools and community organizations. JA programs help teens to stand out from their peers by teaching them success skills, such as how to develop a professional resume and how to come across well in an interview.

"Since the recession began, the job market has been fierce for all Americans, regardless of age. Adults who have been laid off and even those who thought they were retired may need to take lower paying jobs typically reserved for teens," said Joseph Peri, president of Junior Achievement. "Younger workers may be at a disadvantage because of lack of work experience. It is crucial for them to be organized and to present themselves professionally. It is imperative for parents, teachers and mentors, such as our JA New York volunteers, to help teens prepare for a successful job search."



JA New York has developed a series of tips for teens to increase their chances of finding summer employment:

1) **Sell Yourself Through a Professional Resume.** An updated professional resume - free of mistakes is an important job search marketing tool for young people. It should highlight work experience, or if this is a teen's first job, include public service and extracurricular activities, along with computer skills and relevant course work.

2) **Spring clean you personal brand & public reputation.** Pay attention to personal branding details which may derail your job search efforts. Use an e-mail address that reflects you

well, not one that may be silly, distracting or offensive to prospective employers. Spend some time reviewing and cleaning up your online profiles. In the digital age the line between private and public has become blurred. Many people have been tripped up by public social networking profiles which contain questionable images or content/postings in poor taste. It's common for prospective employers to run a search on you. Also pay attention to content posted to your profile from friends in your network. Delete all inappropriate or offensive material to maintain a responsible job ready image.

- 3) **Put Social Media to Work.** Most teens are already familiar with a wide array of social media opportunities. Teens should join LinkedIn, a professional social network, and join groups in their desired industry. Not only can teens post their resume, but often times these groups will post jobs. Teens can also find similar groups on Facebook and MySpace.
- 4) **Avail Yourself of Message Boards.** Teens should post their resume and search job postings on sites like Monster.com, SnagAJob.com, and Idealist.org (for non-profits). Most of these online sites allow users to search by zip code for job opportunities. Teens should also use more traditional means like the classified section of their local newspaper.
- 5) **Talk to Everyone and Anyone.** Since job opportunities can come about at any time, teens should constantly network. Teens can e-mail their friends, parents of friends, relatives, and teachers - everyone they can think of - giving a brief description of the job they're looking for or stating that they're available for any position.
- 6) **Work the Phones and Pound the Pavement.** There's no better way for teens to find a job than to make some calls and stop by stores. Teens can use the Internet check to see if any businesses in their area have openings and follow up with a visit. In industries with a high turnover rate - like restaurants - jobs can become available any day at any time. Be persistent and remember that the more you apply the better chance you have of finding a job.
- 7) **Be Strategic and Go Where the Jobs Are.** Teens should think about which jobs are highest in demand during the summer. Working at amusement parks, baseball fields, ice cream shops, or on the beach are all great choices for the summer months.



- 8) **Be Prepared For the Interview.** If you land a job interview, you need to present the best version of yourself. Make sure you know the background of the company (research it on the Internet); develop answers to common interview questions; think of a few questions you could ask; practice a 30-second pitch of why you're the best candidate for the job; and dress conservatively for the interview. Remember you can only make one first impression.

- 9) **Can't Find a Job? – Make A Job! Consider Being Your Own Boss.** If you're coming up empty-handed in the job search, take the initiative and start your own business. Whether it's dog-walking, babysitting, or landscaping, teens can use their skills to make money. Teens can print out fliers advertising their services, with rates and contact information. Drop them off at homes in the area and ask supermarkets and coffee shops to post them on bulletin boards. This is an especially great idea for younger teens since they may not have working papers.

- 10) **Even with No Pay, Volunteering and Interning Are Great Options.** Internships and volunteer opportunities are abundant- especially in this economy where businesses are trying to cut back on costs. These opportunities may not pay, but they do offer hands-on experience for next year's resume and for one's future.

If you'd like to learn more about JA New York's workforce readiness programs for teens in the New York City and Long Island schools, please call: 212-907-0028 or e-mail info@jany.org.