

# Lessons Learned



**Insider tips from the under thirty crowd on what they learned while doing their job search. Think of it as adding “extra power” to your search.**

**“Straight out of college,** I guess the ‘don’t put all your eggs in one basket’ theory applied to my interviews. I kept many options open until I was certain the job and company I wanted was able to offer me a challenging role I was interested in as well as the opportunity to advance within the company. Face-to-face interviews are key to successfully finding a company to suit your needs. It becomes very obvious when an interviewer is intrigued by you; if they are sincerely interested in you and what you have to offer, you can be guaranteed to get the support you need to succeed.”

**“Much of my search started with the internet and making random phone calls** to the companies that caught my eye. It’s amazing who you get to talk to just by picking up the phone and calling. Rather than just talking with the HR reps, you can request to speak with someone who is currently working in the role for which you are interested. This can help you gain some great insight on specific job requirements, the day-to-day grind, employee morale, etc.”

**“I think the interview process itself was a tell-tale sign** of the company that I was interviewing with. The interview process for two of the places I interviewed with was one meeting and an offer followed a day later. My impression was they didn’t really want to get to know me. They just needed a body as soon as possible. With my company, I had a phone interview with a VP, then a sit down interview/breakfast with the EVP, and then a site visit and interview with a PM and Superintendent and some of the staff on site. The whole process made me feel this company really cares about the kind of person they are potentially bringing in. The other companies wanted me to make a decision on the spot and I never felt pressured at any point in the process with this company. The bottom line for me was I felt comfortable during the whole process. In the end, I made my decision based on the people I felt most comfortable with.”

# Lessons Learned



**“The most successful tool I utilized was** the CEM department as an alumni. I had a trusted source send me their latest career fair bulletin, which gave me contacts for over 300 companies! From there I narrowed my search. I worked in this department as a student and witnessed many times that alumni were utilizing the same resources as professionals were. I constantly hear that the construction industry functions heavily on relationships and I couldn’t agree more.”

**“Don’t rush into anything.** A quality employer is willing to wait.”

**“Know what kind of construction you want/enjoy most.** I learned that flexibility in this area doesn’t impress anyone. Companies are looking for prospects that know what they want to do.”

**“Looking back, one of my unexpected ‘lessons learned’ was** about the importance of understanding how a company was going to let me know how I was doing in the job. How often was I going to be reviewed? Exactly who would give me the feedback? Training programs are an important gauge when looking at a company, but I’ve learned that in order to really grow quickly and be challenged I need consistent feedback on my performance as well as ideas on how else I can contribute to the company.”

**“As far as lessons learned while performing my job search** I realized that almost every company’s recruiter did an excellent job selling their company. Every recruiter preached their company’s philosophy and job experiences. It was difficult for me to decipher which companies actually believed and practiced the philosophies and which companies were all talk. I found that the best tool to verify which companies were truly quality companies was the amount of repeat business conducted. Repeat business is the result of satisfied customers and that is a great indicator of the quality company.”

# Lessons Learned



**“The first step in my job search was** to determine what really mattered to me. What were going to be the qualities in a company and its offer that would set it apart from the others? For me, I determined right away that the monetary end of the offer would not be my main determining factor. It holds true for me that “money can buy a lot of things but it can’t buy happiness”. As cheesy as that sounds you could not pay me enough money to get up in the morning knowing that I was going to a job that I didn’t enjoy with a company that was merely the highest bidder.”

**“Be sure to listen to everything each company has to offer** and create a set of questions to ask every employer. Make sure to keep track of the answers from each employer so at the end of the day, you can start to narrow down to a Top 5 list.

What worked well for me was making this Top 5 list the focus of the interview process. These were the companies that I knew regardless of offers, I could have worked for them. It’s important that you find out whether the company wants you AND you want the company. Remember that it’s about enjoying what you do and whether you can picture yourself working for them.

When getting down to the final decision, ask to talk to some of the younger employees that started in the last three years. Make sure you reach out to these employees to confirm the answers the recruiter gave you. Don’t be afraid to ask what they like and don’t like about their company. Ask about where they live, cost of living, the commute, night life, etc., as there are questions you might not have asked the recruiter because they were older.

Going through this type of a process will make sure that your first few years out of school are successful for both you and your employer.”