

11 Ways to Prove

Employers are looking for love. And not just on Valentine's Day.

After all, they can teach someone how to do the job, but they can't teach enthusiasm. So there's a good chance that if you can demonstrate passion, you're 99% of the way to getting hired.

1 Read Magazines, Periodicals and Websites

Be a regular reader of industry magazines, periodicals and websites to keep up to date on the latest trends. Employers like this because the more inside information you have about an industry, the better prepared you will be to assist your new company in furthering its goals. In an interview, you will impress a potential employer if you can talk about industry trends or articles you've read. Article topics also make a great conversation starter at meetings and networking events.

2 Join an Industry Association

Most industries have formal associations made up of like-minded professionals who gather regularly to share information. Many offer students a discounted membership. Being a member of an association looks great on a resume and shows you take your career seriously. You'll also gain access to potential job leads, training sessions and networking opportunities.

3 Take Extra Courses

Taking extra courses or joining professional development seminars will help you stand out from the competition because it shows an employer you want to further your knowledge. Consider, for example, training on the latest software or getting involved in a group that provides training in formal public speaking.

4 Take Part in Internships and Co-ops

Secure an internship or co-op at a company you would like to work for in the future, it's a great way to show your desire to be a part of that organization and improve your chance of being considered for a position. Often employers use internships as an opportunity to test out your skills and fit with the company, so it's a way to showcase your initiative, work habits and abilities. While researching a company, make sure its mission and values align with your beliefs. This will ensure a nice fit with the company, making it easy to showcase your passion for the organization.

"We had a candidate who applied for a position with us and who had done his homework. He knew what we were about, how his interests fit with our direction and what he wanted to do. At one point in the interview process, he stated: I already have a job offer from X competitor for Y amount of money (he gave the details). However, I want to work here so bad, I am willing to do it for half of what the other firm is offering me.

"We offered him the job. Not just because he was willing to work for less than the market (we paid him market) but because he was so passionate and was able to explain why he wanted to work with us."

David Hyatt, Ph.D., founding partner and President of CorVirtus, a human resources consulting and research firm.
www.corvirtus.com

5 Take Part in School Clubs

Join clubs and take part in events that relate to your future goals. If you want to be a photographer for example, join the school's photography club. Employers will be impressed with your dedication.

6 Take Part in Industry Events

Most industries have conferences, forums and workshops that will give you the chance to meet like-minded people and gain access to the latest research and new practices. Go to as many of these events as you can to prove to an employer how motivated you are to learn the latest information. You can find out about these events through industry associations, websites and periodicals.

e You've Got Passion

BY TRACY ROGERS

7 Volunteer

By volunteering you are showing you are committed to the field and willing to go above and beyond. Volunteer at a company you would like to work for — maybe at a company event or as a regular weekly volunteer. You never know, your volunteering could lead to a permanent job.

8 Network

Employers like to see that you know people in the field. Do you regularly meet to discuss your industry through online forums or blogs? Have you taken the initiative to gather like-minded people together through Facebook groups or other formal social networking opportunities? Get involved with as many people as you can and show that you enjoy discussing the field.

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"I loved it when candidates knew several key points about our products and services when I first called them about their resume. It showed me that they were passionate about this job, and not just blasting their resume out to 100 employers."

"Also, if I had to choose between two equal candidates, I always chose the candidate who seemed to want the job more – the one who sent me short but simple e-mails and follow-up voicemails. The key here is very short and polite messages – never rambling and never pushy."

**Brian Mullins, CEO,
ChicagolandSalesJobs.com**

9 Do Plenty of Research

Take time to research the organization to show you are passionate about working there. Be able to demonstrate you know plenty of details about the job, as well as the company's clients, successes, history and products. In your cover letter and at interview, show that you have similar values and highlight what you can do for that employer.

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"A former broker trainee and newly-licensed broker at Scottrade's branch offices in Lancaster, Pa., is a great example. He was nearing graduation and looking to start a career at Scottrade. I didn't get the feeling that he was looking for just any full-time job that paid. Instead, he knew what it meant to work for Scottrade and was determined to be given an opportunity to shine. That passion was obvious to both myself and the branch manager."

**Amy Meister, a recruiter with Scottrade, a financial brokerage.
www.scottrade.com**

10 Get Relevant Work Experience

Find a part-time or summer job that is relevant to your studies and interests. For example, if you want to have a career in retail management, an employer would expect that you have worked within the retail industry. If you take a part-time job in a store, you will develop excellent transferable skills and gain inside information about that company which may lead you to a corporate office position. This shows a potential employer you are passionate about that company and that you want to build your career with it.

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"At the interview, a candidate brought copies of the last 18 months of public documents, organizational charts and her own analysis of the company's financial concerns and was able to ask insightful questions as well as discuss her thoughts for how she could contribute to the company. It was evident she had targeted my company and was confident in what she could do for us. Needless to say, I hired her... and what a great employee!"

**Susan Stockton, GPHR/CICP Corporate Growth Consultants.
www.hrtcb.com**

11 Ask for the Job

Make it very clear that you really want to work for that company — that you're not just after any job but you really want to work for that organization. After all, an employer wants to know that you really care and that you'll work with passion when you get hired.

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"I recently finalized negotiations with a new Vice President for PowerMark's PR Division. This candidate followed up every live interaction with an email that expressed his excitement about the position and why he thought he would be a good fit. He wrote to me from an airplane over St. Lucia, sent me photos of a Cal Berkley pep rally bonfire in Northern California, and he expressed tremendous enthusiasm over a new PR opportunity with IBM."

"His references were prepped and they were interviewing me about my company as much as I was interviewing them about the candidate, demonstrating that he has developed very strong relationships at very high levels and he was taking this opportunity very seriously."

"I was very excited about this candidate from the outset, but his references closed the deal."

Colleen Edwards, President, The PowerMark Group, a marketing and public relations company. www.thepowermarkgroup.com

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