

Breaking into the Working World of Teaching

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In every college in the country there are ambitious and starry-eyed youngsters who are preparing for a career in teaching. At some point that army of graduates will hit the streets to find jobs in the field of teaching. What is not often taught in colleges are the real world skills of how to actually find a good teaching job right out of school. While there is always a need for good teachers the new graduate should develop some skills in finding the kind of teaching job they have always dreamed of. Even from that first job their career in teaching gets off on the right foot.

There is a lot you can do even before graduation to get your job search moving and to make yourself desirable as a teacher. When school administrators get flooded with applications from newly graduated teachers you will stand out as the one they want to call for an interview. One thing you can do at any time during your academic career is to intern as a teaching assistant and volunteer to teach in underprivileged schools.

You can teach just a few hours a day and work it around your academic work. By taking on the working world of teaching even before you have your degree, you will be able to present yourself to employers post graduation as someone who has real world experience in the classroom and “knows the ropes” of getting through an academic year with real students. That is tremendously valuable to a school administrator with a spot to fill because it reduces the concern that a new graduate who has never faced a classroom full of restless children might wash out when the reality of what teaching is really like.

Another way to get a jump start on the market before students flood the schools for jobs is to start your search early in

your last semester of school. Schools know by February or March if they will have jobs to fill for the next academic year. So if you begin your search for a teaching position in March or April, you can often land an interview or even secure a position for the fall long before many of your contemporaries in school begin their hunt for their first teaching job.

Becoming proactive like this always gives you the advantage in finding the job you really want rather than just “any job” in the teaching profession. Spend some time narrowing down exactly what kind of teaching position you want and at what level you feel your personality and teaching style will benefit students the most. You may do much better with young children than with teenagers or you may wish to focus on high school students because they are more intellectually equipped to grasp the subject matter with you. By knowing well in advance where you want to teach, you can target those kinds of positions in your job search and improve your chances of finding that perfect teaching job.

You should make the phrase “leave no stone unturned” your motto for hunting up the teaching jobs that are open in your community. First of all, be very proactive in your search. Just because you are graduating, even with honors, with your teaching degree that doesn't mean the schools will seek you with jobs. Take the search to them before someone else does, in doing so it will be you that gets the premium teaching positions rather than have to take “what's left” after the good teaching positions are snatched up by more aggressive graduates.

There are lots of ways you can flush out those teaching jobs. Check the HR or employment offices at the schools you would like to be a part of and keep an eye on their employment bulletin boards. Use the internet wisely, watch the newspaper and even get in touch with placement agencies who are known for placing new teachers.

But above all, network, network, network. Use every contact you have and forge new relationships to get the inside scoop on jobs before they even become public. Networking is the number one best way to find great teaching positions so you should use it extensively to find a position to get your teaching career off on a great start toward a great future of success in the field of teaching.