



December 23, 2008

## Getting ready for the recession

Training, professionalism can help jobseekers find work even in tough economic conditions

By *JOE GIESSLER*  
*The Eagle-Gazette Staff*

LANCASTER - As unemployment rates rise and the job market tightens, job seekers are searching for more ways to get noticed by potential employers.

Tips for getting a job do not change whether or not the U.S. economy is recession, but it does enhance their importance, said Nina Ried-Williamson, workforce development supervisor for Fairfield County Job & Family Services.

"You can't afford to mess up an interview because those opportunities, may be few and far between," she said.

Researching the industry and the individual company before an interview can be impressive to employers, said Ried-Williamson.

"Showing you've done your research is something that most people don't do, and it's a benefit to help you stand out," she said.

While out of work, job seekers might want to find ways to get more training to increase the number of their of marketable abilities, as well.

Ried-Williamson said learning more about computers can add a lot to a resume.

"Upgrading your skills is vital to the job search and to stand out," she said.

Jenny LaRue, communications coordinator for the Ohio University Lancaster Campus, said people looking for jobs also should focus their efforts on networking.

"Talk to anyone and everyone, attend meetings and training sessions," she said. "A person has to get creative, sit down and think about where the jobs are."

Ried-Williamson said the medical field, transportation, retail, customer service and commercial construction have not been as effected by the recession as other markets.

Mitch Gorsuch, market manager at Acloche, a job placement service, said beyond the resume and networking, even a good attitude can lead to a new job.

"Be optimistic when looking for a job," he said. "Optimism breeds optimism."

Lancaster City Schools Assistant Superintendent and Human Resources Director Rob Walker said the education field saw a boom in available jobs in recent years.

During the past eight years, there have been many jobs that were eliminated that aren't coming back, leaving people in search of a new career, Walker said.

"There were so many people out there that were needing additional education," Walker said.

He said there are an increasing number of people in need of retraining because of the recession.

Walker said he hired 60 new people for the district this past year, though there were more than 1,100 applicants.

He said although an online assessment helps narrow the number of applicants down to about 250, nothing can replace a person who has done a good job in the classroom and has a great interview.

LaRue said a resume free of errors, a firm handshake and appropriate interview attire are crucial to landing a job.

Ried-Williamson said organizing a job search and following up with an employer after an interview is a key to success.

"Take that extra step to make yourself stand out," she said.

Walker said one final tip is to not be too picky about the job you take, if offered.

"We all can't start at the top," he said. "(Be) willing to accept a job and be flexible."

---