

Predicting the Jobs of the Future

by Jan Cannon

They're up, they're down. I'm talking about economic cycles. You know the old saying, "what goes up must come down." Equally true, especially in economic terms, is "what's down will go up." When and how quickly are the answers we usually don't have. But even with uncertainty there are some things you can do to ensure success in your job search.

In any downturn, not every company is in trouble. Who is succeeding? Where are the profits from a change of events? Computer viruses up the ante for firewall companies. Dot.com retailers who go bust leave the business for the brick and mortar stores. Everyone needs to eat, no matter what happens to the economy. There are jobs available for the manufacturers and the grocery store owners as well as the distributors who service them. Think of where the action is in your field. If it goes sour, who will take up the slack? Look there for jobs.

How can you find out about companies who might offer possible jobs? Reading and interpreting the business news, conducting informational interviews and library and Internet research on industries and specific companies. What are the topics of business newspaper and magazine articles? What's the buzz when you attend association meetings? Figure out the trends and use that information to your benefit to both look for jobs and impress people you meet who might know about job openings. It shows you're an eager, informed candidate.

Business trends can also help you craft your resume. If you know that an industry is moving in a specific direction you can feature portions of your experience that align with that on your resume. And the trends can also help focus questions for interviews – informational and job. If you can think of some solutions for current economic problems, share them on your interviews. They'll separate you from the others and improve your chances of being offered the job.