

## Service Call: Jobs on the rise in companies looking

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The Philadelphia job market has seen dramatic growth in recent months of jobs in the service sector. Finding and landing these jobs can be made easier with the proper preparation.

Lauren Williams, managing partner for Princeton Search Group in Philadelphia, says that the majority of her placements have been coming in the service area.

"A lot of companies have run lean and mean over the past two to three years," she says. "They have done more with less employees. Now with business picking up, they are adding staff to make up for those new business activities."

Helping out

The service sector can be defined as any company that provides a service rather than selling a product. Since many manufacturers are moving offshore to save money, jobs that provide services are picking up steam when it comes to hiring.

"This is a reflection of the general economy," says Michael Fritsch, CEO of Prometheus Performance Systems in Austin, Texas. "The July numbers showed significant growth in the service sector with manufacturing lagging. Also, manufacturing tends to be centralized or localized while service jobs may be more distributed."

Role playing

Williams says the service companies she sees that are hiring are the ones involved in outsourcing.

"The whole idea behind outsourcing is the company has its core skills, and there are vendors who can outsource their non-core skills," Williams says. "In a hospital, for example, where their primary job is providing health care, they can outsource areas such as facilities management or diagnostic imaging."

In general, service companies can't be outsourced overseas.

"Labor is a critical part of service," says Bob Cannon, a management consultant in Burton, Ohio. "Service also requires a higher level of customer awareness and positive attitude than does the average manufacturing job. Consequently, attitude, communication skills and people skills are critical to a service business when it is not as critical to a manufacturing business."

Temporary workers

An increase in contract staffing is also on the rise.

"This is where a company takes an employee for a period of time on a special project," says Williams. "With baby boomers heading out of the job market they are leaving a vacancy for new employees."

When it comes to applying and interviewing for a service job a lot of the same universal methods apply.

"When it comes to interviewing there is really no difference between a company that sells products or services," says Fritsch. "The distinction between a product and a service is becoming less relevant as those things get bundled or combined in the marketplace. The more important consideration is the nature of the job you're interviewing for."

Williams says she advises candidates to draw as many parallels as they can between their current role and the one that they're seeking.

"One generic resume is not always the best way to go," she says. "Tailor it to jobs you see. Companies are not looking for fluff."

You should customize your resume to fit the job and the company by making sure your qualifications match up with the job description.

"You want to make sure that it's easy for the interviewer to match up your qualifications with those of the job," says Fritsch. "Match the wording of your previous experience to the job description."

Even more important is showing how you can affect the company's bottom line.

"Show how you have been able to save money or generate revenue," she says. "Every position generates or saves costs."

Finally, before heading into interviews, make sure your background check checks out.

"Many employers will conduct a background or credit check," says Fritsch. "Don't lie or omit anything on your resume — if your employer finds a lie or missing information you may not get the job, or you may even be fired after getting the job."

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