Company Research

DCRN
Delaware Career Resource Network

Why Should I Research Companies?

1. Because you want to work for a company that is a good personal and professional fit.

- Does your personality match the corporate culture, e.g., laid back, formal, creative, rigid, team-centered?
- Are your personal values aligned with the mission and core values of the business?
- Will you be motivated to contribute to the overall success of the organization because you believe in it?

2. Because you want to *get* the interview.

- You will be able to tailor your resume and cover letter to match the needs of the company.
- Your enthusiasm for the company will be apparent in your application materials.

3. Because you want to *ace* the interview.

- You will be able to genuinely answer the question, "Why do you want to work here?"
- You will be able to express how your specific skills and experience relate to the mission of the company.
- You will be able to express how and where you will fit in to make the organization more successful.
- You will be able to talk about the company rather than yourself and your own wants and needs.
- You might discover that you have something in common with one of your interviewers, e.g., you went to the same high school, you have the same hobby, or you have mutual friends.

What Kinds of Things Should I Research?

1. The key personnel. What was their career path to this position in this company?

2. The mission and values of the company. Will you be a good culture fit?

3. The company's products and/or services.

4. The age of the company and the key events in its history.

5. Recent layoffs or financial difficulties.

6. Its customers (clients).

7. Its competitors.

8. Its market share and reputation in the industry.

9. Size of company. How many employees and how many offices in the country/world?

10. Short and long-term goals.



Where Can I Find Company Information?

1. The Company Website

Begin your research at the source. How does the company represent itself? What are the facts of the company? Does the website include photos, videos, and/or podcasts to tell its story? Is the company publicly traded? See if you can download a copy of its annual report or call to request one.

2. Other Websites

- Hoovers: ***www.hoovers.com*** offers extensive corporate information.
- Investor Relations Information Network: ***www.irin.com*** provides annual reports and information online for any public company.
- Vault: ***www.vault.com*** provides extensive company information. It also has a feature called, ***A Day in the Life,*** in which an employee details a typical day at his/her company.
- Better Business Bureau: ***www.bbb.org/us*** provides services and programs to assist consumers and businesses and to promote an ethical marketplace.

3. News Searches

After reading through what the company says about itself, it's a good idea to get other perspectives. Use search engines such as *Google* and *Google News* to find current and past news. Local online newspapers operating in the company's hometown are a good source of information; they often cover hometown businesses more extensively than national papers and you might get a sense of its connection and contributions to the community.

4. Industry Websites

One indicator of a company's success is its industry standing. Nearly every industry has a trade association or trade publications that report on industry news and trends. This research will also give you a better idea of the direction the industry is heading, which will alert you to the chances of continued success for the company you are researching.

- Delaware Department of Labor: ***www.delawareworks.com/oolmi/Information/LMIData/Projections.aspx*** provides Delaware industry employment projections ten years into the future.
- Bureau of Labor Statistics: ***www.bls.gov/bls/industry.htm*** provides detailed industry information including employment and hours & earnings.

5. Talk to People

You will learn a lot about a corporation by talking to employees, former employees, and friends and relatives of employees. Chances are you will find someone in your own network who has an insider's perspective. Use the questions below to get started but add your own based on your priorities.

- What is the morale at the business?
- How do employees feel about the company's direction and future?
- Does the business have a good reputation in the community?
- Why have employees chosen to leave the business?

6. Social Media*

A. LinkedIn

- *Company Page* – search its name in LinkedIn's search bar. See how the organization describes itself.
- *Insights* tab – see who is getting promoted and where people worked before they came to the organization.
- *How You're Connected* – Look for people in your network who work there. Some may be immediate members of your network and some may have a second-degree connection. Check their profiles to see what groups and interests you might have in common.

B. Facebook

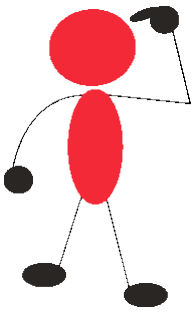
- *Like* the company's page. You'll not only get its updates in your *Newsfeed*, but you may also find videos and photos that will help you visualize their work and their employees.

C. Twitter

- *Follow* the company's Twitter account. You will immediately have lots of up-to-date information. Also, look at who the company is following. This list could help you find other organizational accounts or even some of its employees to follow.
- *Search for tweets* about the organization. Go to: ***search.twitter.com***. Type the company's name in the search box (using quotes around the name if it's more than one word) to find tweets about the company. You do not need to sign in to Twitter to use this search feature.

D. Glassdoor

- For an *inside look* at jobs and companies, go to ***www.glassdoor.com*** to search salaries, reviews, and interview questions posted anonymously by employees and job seekers.



*** A Word to the Wise:** Social media is just one tool of many to use for your company research. Avoid making important decisions based solely on social media. Always corroborate your findings with other resources in order to "paint a complete picture" of the company you are researching.

Company Research

If you have ready-access to a computer, use a spreadsheet or word document to keep track of your research.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of Company/Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone number: _____

Website: _____

LinkedIn: _____

Facebook: _____

Twitter: _____

Hiring contact (if applicable): _____

Hiring contact's position: _____

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Year founded: _____

Total # of employees at the local site: _____ All sites: _____

Key personnel and position:

Key products and/or services:

Company mission, vision, values:

Customer (client) base:

Industry competitors:

Current and long-term projects and initiatives:

ABOUT ME

This is how I will contribute to the company. This is how I see myself fitting in.

Use the back for further notes that may include: recent layoffs, training opportunities, work environment, reputation, company culture, etc.