

WANT TO MOVE FROM A SMALL TOWN TO A BIG CITY? HERE'S HOW TO GET STARTED

Summary: Learn how to make the transition from a small town to a city with greater opportunities in this article.



Question: I just graduated from college and am currently living at home. I want to move to the city but am hesitant to do so without having a job first. On the other hand, it is tough to get my foot in the door since I don't live near any of the companies I am interested in. Is there another way to get my foot in the door?

Answer: Getting the job first is certainly the more cautious, and some would say, more realistic approach. The truth is that you can find proponents of either persuasion who have made a successful go of it. Since you just graduated, how about a time-specified trial run from home base? If no offers come through on your job search in, say, six months—or whatever time frame suits your style and your pocketbook—the ground work you have laid will better position you if you do decide to head for the city.

Although a long-distance campaign lacks the convenience and availability of a local search, much of the research and early networking that are critical to a successful search can be done from afar. Start by identifying and thoroughly researching your desired companies so that you have a clear understanding of their needs and your potential contributions. Supplement information garnered from the Internet with personal connections. Contacts in your current city, alumni of your alma mater, relatives, and even social acquaintances may know someone who knows something about your targeted employers.

Once fortified with names and information, a well-planned visit to the city is in order. Begin calling, writing, or e-mailing to set up appointments with both networking contacts and potential employers. Explain that you will be in the area during a particular week and would like to explore the possibility of scheduling a meeting for a half-hour at a convenient time for them. Understand that while you may be lucky enough to set up an actual job interview beforehand, most of these scheduled meetings will be informational in nature with the intention of getting you in front of employers to make a live and lasting impression that will lead to a job interview at some point.

This means your marketing package and presentation skills have to be top-notch—something else you can be practicing as part of your preparation back at home. As you build on connections and pick up leads while you are in the city, use the remainder of any unscheduled time to follow up on referrals, set up more face-to-face conversations and explore living arrangements, should you decide to make the move.

See **Thinking about Job Relocation?** for more information.