

# Patience can pay off in job search

By Brad Carlson  
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Finding a job took Sue Evancho much less time than she anticipated.

"I was hearing all sorts of absolute horror stories," she said.

Evancho now works as an accounts receivable specialist with Jackson Oil Co., based in Meridian.

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- Sue Evancho, Jackson Oil Co.

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She was hired in what can be considered short order in today's market, characterized by more workers applying for a shrinking supply of jobs. She worked her last day at Selkirk Corp. - a Nampa company for which she worked since 1984, most recently as credit manager - and started her official job search Feb. 2. Jacksons called her March 5, she interviewed March 6 and was offered her new job March 13.

Selkirk moved most of its accounting functions to a sister company that Selkirk merged into, Hart & Cooley Inc. in Grand Rapids, Mich. Evancho decided to stay in Idaho. She received severance pay, which "I had visions of running out of," she said.

Evancho, in seeking a job, sent resumes and followed up - the same approach she used when she last looked for work years ago except for today's largely online processes. This time, many employers did not respond.

It seemed that employers outlined very specific requirements for available jobs, she said.

"Whereas in a previous economic circumstance I would've been given a second look for all sorts of jobs just because of my background and experience, with so many people looking for employment, an employer really could narrowly define their requirements," Evancho said.

For example, medical billing applicants often needed experience in medical billing - not just accounting, accounts payable or receivable, she said. And many employers wanted specific computer skills and even experience with particular software.

"Maybe they would have been willing to train you," previously, Evancho said. "They are really narrowing their requirements."

She applied for a variety of positions, including those for which she was under-qualified or over-qualified. She ran across few opportunities in middle or upper management, but at a job fair saw opportunities in financial product sales as well as a

large employer's referral to its online job-search system.

"I'm extremely happy with my current position and feel very fortunate to be part of a local, stable, growing and healthy company as opposed to some other places that are paring down or just hiring temps," Evancho said.

Wendie Gregory, branch manager with the Manpower Inc. staffing firm in Boise, said customer-service call centers continue to hire in the Boise area, a popular location for the centers given its time zone and its cost of living that remains relatively low.

"A lot of the call centers will look at someone with less work history, where some other industries are looking for a certain amount of experience," she said.

The Boise area also is seeing some hiring in the mortgage industry again, helped by refinancing and first-time-buyer activity sparked by low interest rates, Gregory said.

Demand for Manpower's staffing services is up for call-center work and for jobs in new companies, such as "green" companies, she said. Demand is down in areas including warehousing and production, she said.

Pools of available talent in certain skill areas aren't as deep as anticipated in some instances, because qualified workers who have jobs are keeping them, Gregory said.

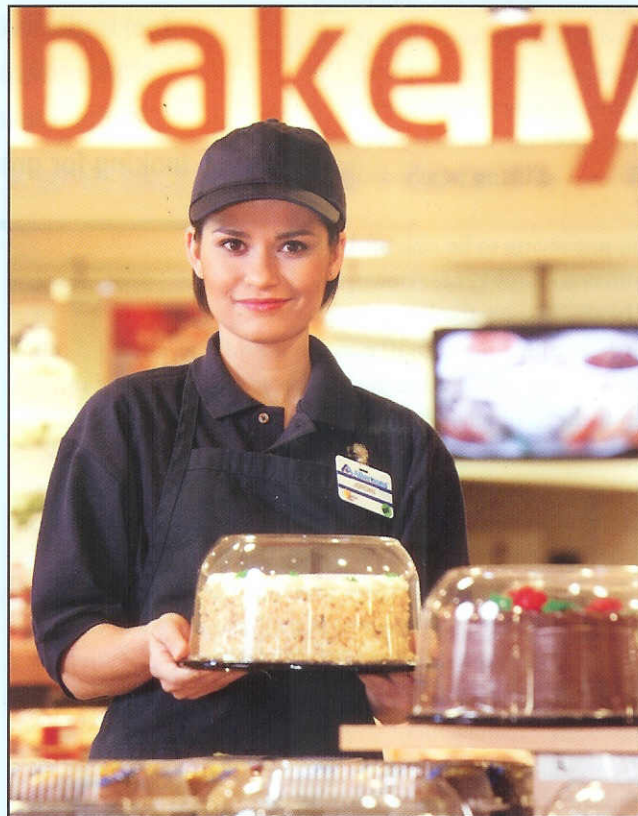


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Albertsons says its hiring criteria have not changed, and that it aims to attract associates who are committed to serving customers and have passion for food and the retail environment.