



- Follow up with a thank you email within 24 hours of the interview.

### Honesty: The Best Policy?

This is a sticky issue for recovering addicts. Employers might be prejudiced against candidates with a history of substance abuse. Still, lying on a job interview is never a good idea. If you are asked about substance abuse and lie about it and your dishonesty is discovered later on, it could be used as a reason for dismissal.

Experts advise people in recovery not to mention their past drug or alcohol use unless asked about it specifically, in which case you should speak about it succinctly and positively, stressing your commitment to a productive, addiction-free life. Actually, employers are forbidden to press the issue too deeply. Former addicts are protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act, which considers addiction a medical condition.

### Tap your network

- Make a list of everyone you know and get in touch with those who might be a source for work in a field you're interested in. Or call those who might be willing to brainstorm with you about new fields to explore.
- Attend events given by professional organizations and charities within your field of interest. Exchange contact info and follow up with other attendees.
- Contact governmental or non-profit services, such as The Dept. of Labor's [One Stop Career Center](#); [America in Recovery](#), an organization which links recovering addicts with potential employers; and [The National Hire Network](#), which assists people with criminal records in finding jobs.
- Use social media to expand your network, gather information about your field and put your qualifications out to a community of people who can connect you with employment opportunities. Put your resume on LinkedIn. Create a Facebook page and Google-Plus Profile dedicated solely to your professional life.

### A Word on Social Media

Employers routinely search the internet for background on prospective employees, so you might want to remove photos from your personal Facebook page that you wouldn't want them to see.

### Other Steps to Finding Employment

While you're Searching for a fulltime job you might consider interning with a company in a field you're interested in to gain appropriate experience and skills. While usually unpaid, an internship can lead to a job offer and in any case will give you something impressive to add to your resume.

The US Department of Labor runs an apprenticeship program that matches people who seek training for high-paying jobs in a wide range of industries with companies in need of skilled workers. From the start apprentices earn a wage, which increases as their skills improve. Visit [The United States Department of Labor website](#) and look for the Registered Apprenticeship program.

### Don't be Discouraged

The prospect of looking for a job while in recovery may be worrying, but actually there may never be a better time for it. Having gotten off of drugs or alcohol and committed to a program, you are probably healthier and more clear-headed, energetic and determined than you've been in a long time.



#### About Steve Cutler

A freelance writer based in New York City and South Florida, Steve Cutler writes extensively on substance abuse, recovery and family systems.

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Delray Beach  
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1200 N.W. 17th Ave., Suite 8  
Delray Beach, FL 33445  
800-767-1568  
561-501-4417