

What to consider when searching for a job

Here at the Register of Tradeswomen we are determined to help as many people as we can find jobs in the construction industry.

We have worked closely with companies like Vaillant UK, Monument Tools, Redrow Homes and Kier to name a few.

We also work with colleges and awarding bodies like City and Guilds and LCL Awards to enable them to swell the numbers of women joining the construction and skilled trades industries.

For many years women in the construction industry have been a rare sight. Though, more women are getting into the construction sector we still remain at single percentage figures.

The Register of Tradeswomen Opportunities site aims to change that but we are aware that for many companies this is a box ticking exercise rather than a genuine will to change the culture.

You will notice on each job post there are 2 questions.

1. Does your company have a Diversity and Inclusion Policy?
2. What actions has your company taken in the last 6-12 months towards your D and I goals?

The responses to these questions will give you a sense of whether the company you are looking at is a good fit for you before you go to the effort of applying.

Before applying for any of the jobs on this site we highly recommend you carry out some due diligence. The dictionary definition says that due diligence means “the care that a reasonable person exercises to avoid harm to themselves or other people” In plain English, due diligence means **doing your homework to protect yourself**.

We have put together this guide on how to really do your research into a company to help you decide if they are good match for you.

Whether you're doing pre-interview research or you've already received a job offer and are deciding whether or not to accept it, the research phase of your job search is perhaps the most critical from a job seeker's perspective.

Rather than focusing on branding or “selling” yourself to an employer, this is your time to figure out if they are right for you, as you consider things like **company culture**, career path opportunities, work/life balance, and, in general, whether this employer is the right “fit” for your professional (and personal) life.

So how do you answer all of these questions and accept or decline the offer with the knowledge that you've done your due diligence in researching the organisation?

Here are 12 ways (some conventional, and some a little more “out of the box”) to research a potential employer so that you have a more complete picture of everything they have to offer and can then make an informed, confident decision if this is the right place for you:

1. Check out the website

This is likely the first thing you'll do when researching the company, but don't just glance at the home or “about” pages and consider yourself done. Really comb through the site so that you can get a sense not only of their mission or culture but also the overall health and direction of the organisation. Remember, you're not only looking for successes but also for potential red

flags or challenges so that you can have those questions answered either during your interview or before you accept an offer.

2. Look at their social media

The natural next step after diving into a company's website is to go through all of their social media channels. What kinds of content are they posting? What audiences are they engaging with, and what kind of feedback are they getting (be sure to look at the comment sections for this)? What is the tone they're setting in that professional space, and how are they positioning or branding themselves on social?

3. Search press releases

Another leg of the organisation's branding strategy is their PR. What kind of messaging or news are they promoting about the company? What do they seem to prioritise and want the public to know? Searching press release databases (like PR Newswire, for one) for news that the organisation is putting out there gives you a sense of their most recent and important accomplishments (which are also great talking points for the job interview) and also what the company is most proud of.

4. Ask about company culture

Of course, you'll want to ask your interviewers direct questions about the company culture. But, you can also tap into your own networks for any insights here as well. If you meet any other employees (past or present) from the company during your interview phase, this question should also be at the top of your list.

5 . Read online reviews

Search online for any reviews of the company from former or current employees, clients, partners, or anyone else or other organisation who has worked with your potential new employer. The idea here is to find out not only about their professional reputation in your industry or field, but also to get a more concrete sense of how they work, their strengths and weaknesses, and in general what other people think and say about the company.

6. Set up Google news alerts

Ideally, you'll do this ahead of your interview so you can be armed with any recent news as talking points when you go in, but setting up a Google alert or any other type of online news alert will let you know whenever the organisation is mentioned in the press. Like looking at press releases the company distributes, it's useful to know what's trending with the company, but by setting up this kind of alert, you're also seeing what other organisations or news outlets are saying about the employer (which is often more useful than the one-sided, promotional messaging you get in a press release).

7. Sign up for their newsletter

Job seekers often overlook this little "hidden gem" in their research phase, but many companies and organisations send out daily or weekly newsletters full of their most recent news, events, industry insights or goings-on. This is an excellent way to get a real-time, inside look at what's happening inside the company.

8. Check out the financials

This may take a bit of digging, but in some circumstances where you may be a little uncertain of the company's financial footing (or perhaps you're wondering about the long-term stability of your department or the organisation in general), finding out as much as you can about the company's financial health is an invaluable exercise. Some organisations will make this information pretty readily available on their website, although in other circumstances you may have to get creative and search things like public records databases or business bureaus.

9. Work your contacts

Tap into your networks. Join social media groups such as Female Plumbers and Heating Engineers, All Women in Skilled Trades and find out as much as you can about the employer. You'll be amazed how much you can find out about an employer by simple word of mouth recommendations.

10. Size up the competition

Another often-overlooked strategy in the research phase, you may at first wonder "why look at another company's website to learn more about my potential employer?" Firstly, once you have identified a handful of competitors, you may want to see what they're doing so that you can gauge it against your potential employer's performance, successes, and challenges. How does your potential employer stack up against the other guys? What are they doing better than their competitors, and where do they come up a bit short? Looking at an employer within a wider industry context and against their competitors is one of the best ways to get a more holistic view of how what a company is all about, where they are positioned in the market, and whether or not they're on the road to success or failure.

11. Read bios of leaders

An organisation's leadership is crucial when it comes to setting the tone for company culture and, more broadly, steering its people toward certain priorities and goals. Identify a few of the company's top leaders and spend some time searching their online profiles -- their social media accounts, LinkedIn pages, news articles, anything they've published, etc. Try to ascertain what they're "all about" and what their general professional philosophies are so you can get a sense of whether or not their "vision" and leadership styles align with the kind of environment you're looking for. Are they leaders you think you can thrive under? Do you feel motivated, excited or inspired just looking at what they've done so far? Do they seem like genuinely nice people who care about the organisation and its people? All useful things to keep in the back of your mind as you search.

12. And also those of your interviewers...

It's also worth noting that researching your interviewers in much the same way you investigate the company's leadership is a very useful research exercise to do before your job interview. Take a few minutes to look up the people you'll be interviewing with and make a note of some of the more interesting aspects of their biography. You want to get a sense also of how they lead and work and their own involvement in the organisation, but you also are looking for some potential talking points or questions that you can ask during the interview. Showing them you've done your homework will reflect well in your interview.