

Network to Work Meeting

Resource Materials – November 2017

FOLLOW UP – JOB APPLICATION

10 Rules for Following Up on Job Applications

After sending in job applications, the inevitable waiting game often begins. But many job seekers find the wait almost unbearable. So, how long is too long to wait? And when is it too soon for following up on job applications?

From an employer’s perspective, hiring for a job is very much like managing a project or doing a puzzle. There are several pieces that have to fit together before moving on to the next step. As a job seeker, if you find yourself playing the waiting game, consider the rules and tips listed below for following up on job applications. Remember, you want to make an impression, not be a nuisance.

1. Be patient and wait.

You may have submitted your application two days ago, but you haven’t heard a single thing back. Truly, this isn’t surprising. With hundreds of applications flooding in, it will take time to make it through all of them. As a general rule of thumb, it is best to wait one or two business weeks to follow up. This provides some time to sort through and process most of the applications.

2. Focus on midweek.

If there are two days to avoid following up with someone, it is Monday and Friday. Monday is often a busy transition day as people move back into work mode. As for Friday, if the person doesn’t see your email, it may get buried under a weekend’s worth of emails. Ideally, stick with Tuesday through Thursday for following up on job applications.

3. Provide feedback.

When you follow up on job applications, you don’t want to be too brazen and straight to the point. Don’t simply ask, “What is the status of my application?” Rather than focus on the application, give them something to remember you by. Offer feedback on why you are interested in the company, provide a few extra facts or samples of work, or consider sending in a letter of reference as a way to remind them of you.

4. Don’t be aggressive.

Perhaps persistence and aggressiveness were desired in the past, but nowadays it's better to leave it at the door. You don't want to irritate and bully the people who are supposed to be falling head over heels for you. Be polite and professional, as it will go a long way.

5. Use LinkedIn.

If you are having a hard time finding a way to connect with the recruiter, hiring manager, or company, consider using LinkedIn to your advantage. Follow the company's page and even consider connecting with people you have met.

6. Know How to Contact.

There are several methods to inquire about your job application. The most popular forms are to call in, send an email, or show up in person. Each has its benefit, but for the sake of time, an email is the most effective. Through email, you can avoid being seen as too pushy, but can equally communicate your enthusiasm.

7. Check your spam folder.

The spam and junk email folder is often an overlooked location for important communications. Before jumping to conclusions, check your spam folder to make sure that the company hasn't already contacted you.

8. Be interested, not desperate.

Be enthusiastic when following up with a recruiter, but don't go overboard. Simply remind him of your interest in the position and back it up with a few quick examples of why you would be an excellent fit for the job. Remember to be subtle and to the point. Begging will make you seem desperate and will make a bad impression.

9. Respect personal space.

Being overly personal or casual with a recruiter is a mistake. Recruiters are friendly and it is their job to talk to many people about a position. They don't, however, have time to become personal friends with everyone they interview. Even if your initial interaction was excellent, be professional and respect personal boundaries. Sending recruiters social media invitations or asking for recommendations is not a good idea. The last thing you want is to be considered a potential stalker.

10. Read the fine print.

If an application states "no phone calls," find other ways to follow up such as sending an email or visiting the recruiter in person. If you ignore the request, the recruiter will think you either did not read the job listing carefully or that you do not follow directions well.

EXAMPLES:

Email subject Lines for following up on a job application:

- Looking forward to hearing back
- Anything else you need?
- Any updates on my application?
- Do you need anything else from me?
- Hoping for an update – ____ application
- Any update on the ____ position?
- Would love to discuss my application

Follow up message content:

"Hi _____,

I'm following up on my application for the _____ position. I'm excited to learn more about the opportunity because I thought it'd be a great fit based on my experience with _____. Any update on your end when you get a chance would be really appreciated!"

For the last blank space, pick a skill or piece of experience that fits what the job requires. Something you learned from your past work, education, or training. If you do this, you're going to set yourself apart from the other applicants. You're reminding them of a specific reason why you applied and why you'd be a good fit.

Adapted from:

"12 Rules for Following up on Job Applications" from FlexJobs, Jessica Howington, August 17, 2017.

<https://www.flexjobs.com/blog/post/rules-following-up-on-job-applications/>

and from Biron Clark, Career Sidekick