Network to Work Meeting

May 2019

RESOURCE DOCUMENT – *SEARCHING AND APPLYING FOR JOBS ONLINE*

Best Practices when Searching and Applying for Jobs Online

Using the Internet to search and apply for jobs can sometimes be frustrating and challenging. However, there are many good practices a job seeker can follow in order to make the process easier and the search more successful.

Searching:

1. *Be strategic in selecting job-related websites and job boards*. Limit yourself to a few to prevent overwhelm. Make sure they link to employer career sites that fit your interests.

2. *Set up email job alerts so you will be notified when jobs of interest are posted.* Be sure to use clear and narrow criteria so you don't get bombarded.

3. *Watch out for scam job listings.* Examples are those that promise quick and easy income, require a fee, or ask for your social security number.

4. *Narrow your search with key words, such as a particular company name, a job title, and a commuting distance.* Note that just entering your zip code will produce many job listings that won't be appropriate for you.

   a. Go to https://www.onetonline.org/find/ and enter your occupational code from your IEP, such as 43-4051.00 (Customer Service Representative) in order to find a variety of alternative job titles.

Applying:

1. *Apply on employer websites wherever possible.* Not only is this approach more direct, you are also much less likely to encounter spam and bogus postings.

2. *Don't apply to jobs you aren't qualified for*. If you don't have most of the required qualifications for the position, don't apply for it, even though it may be of interest. You are very unlikely to be contacted for an interview, and applying will only deplete your energy and result in discouragement.

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3. *Post your resume.* If you want to get your qualifications out there in a general manner, post your resume – *with discretion* - on Indeed.com or other job boards, or create a profile on LinkedIn (*see the other Resource document*).

4. *Protect personal information.* Unfortunately, posting a resume online can put your personal information at risk of identity theft. There are safeguards, however, that you can take, as follows:

    a. Post your resume on just a handful of sites with good privacy policies and that allow you to hide your contact information (thereby controlling who contacts you).

    b. The best sites are:
        i. The websites of your target employers
        ii. Indeed.com
        iii. LinkedIn
        iv. Professional Associations
        v. Monster.com
        vi. Job websites that are specific to your profession or industry

    c. Don't include your home address on your resume. Only list your city and state, a single phone number, and a single email address.

    d. Consider using a "throw away" email address that you can cancel if you start getting spam.

    e. Don't put your references' names and phone numbers on any resume posted online. Doing so is giving their information away without their consent.

5. *Tailor your Online Application and Resume to the job with keywords.*

6. *Ensure you make a good impression* by:

    a. Proofreading your application and resume for spelling and grammar errors;
    b. Following all directions for applying;
    c. Being truthful about your qualifications, skills and experience.

7. *Complement your online application with direct outreach to the hiring manager (whenever possible).* Send a letter providing a more three-dimensional picture of yourself and the benefits you have to offer to help them address their particular needs.

    a. Do a Google search for the hiring manager's name. Use as search terms the company name and the individual's title.
    b. Find the mailing address on the company's website, in the "About" or "contact us" section.

Using Keywords in your Job Search

How can you find jobs that match your criteria quickly and efficiently? You'll need a job search engine or job board, such as Indeed.com or Monster.com. Then you need some keywords for your job search. Using keywords that match your skills and interests is the best way to narrow down job listings to find those that are a good fit for your background.

How Keywords Can Get You a Job

A keyword, when used to search for a job, is a word or term that is related to the type of employment you are searching for. When you search for a job by keyword, all the positions that contain the word or term you entered will be displayed. Using keywords can help you weed out the jobs that don't fit and allows you to search more effectively.

Most job sites let job seekers search for job listings by keyword and location, and by using more advanced search options. For example, if you are searching for a retail job, you can search using "retail" as a keyword, then add your location and other search criteria. You can make it even more specific. If you're looking for a retail manager job, for example, you can use that term ("retail manager") as your keyword.

You can also enter keywords that speak to the type of position or experience required. Finally, when you have skills that could be used in a variety of roles, **search by terms that describe your skill set** to find jobs that are a good match.

So, for example, in the "what" or "keyword" box, you might type "retail manager, Burlington Vermont, 5 years' experience, excellent interpersonal skills".

Keywords to Use
When searching for a job online, you can begin with one or two keywords and then add more to get more relevant results and a smaller list of jobs to read through.   Some of the categories of keywords you may want to use to narrow your search include:

- **Field or industry:** Begin by putting in the field or industry you'd like to work in, such as "customer service" or "health care".

- **Location:** You can put in a state, city, town, or even a zip code. On some job sites, you can specify a radius around a location or within a certain number of miles from a location.

- **Desired job title:** You can try putting in your desired title (e.g., marketing coordinator) but keep in mind that not all companies use the same titles. One company may call it the position "marketing coordinator," while another calls the exact same role "PR associate." Try different variations to see which generates the best results. But be cautious about using job titles as a search method and widen your search parameters if you do not get a lot of results.

- **Industry-specific skills, tools, and jargon:** As well as searching by job titles, you can search by the abilities required by a job. For instance, you might search by a computer program name or the particular skills required to do the job.

- **Company names:** If you happen to have a dream company that you'd like to work for—or a giant multinational company that you know has a lot of job openings at any one time—you can search directly by the company name. Also, check the company's LinkedIn page for listings and visit the career section of the employer's website. You may be able to apply on the site and sign up for email alerts for when new jobs are posted.

- **Job type:** When you are looking for a specific type of job you can narrow down search results by putting in terms like full time, part time, contract, freelance, internship, remote, etc. That will give you a list of jobs that match the type of position you're looking for.

Sources:

"Best Keywords to Use in Your Job Search", from *The Balance Careers,* by Alison Doyle, updated May 13, 2018, https://www.thebalancecareers.com/best-keywords-to-use-in-your-job-search-2062028

"Best Sites to Post a Resume or Candidate Profile Online", from *Balance Careers,* by Alison Doyle, updated April 21, 2019, https://www.thebalancecareers.com/the-best-sites-to-post-a-resume-online-2059481