

Top 10 Online Job Search Mistakes

By Paul Fontaine

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How to Find the Perfect Job <http://www.easyonlineguides.com>

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The Internet has made job searching easier and more complex at the same time. Currently, there are nearly 50,000 websites devoted to job searches and careers. You can now send your resume to thousands of potential employers with the touch of a button. Good, bad or indifferent, it's a new world. Here are the top job search mistakes and ways to avoid them.

1. Sending your resume only as an attachment

Some experts say that you should not attach your resume and cover letter to an email. Others say it's acceptable. My recommendation is to do exactly what the job posting states. Many job postings state the preferred method of resume delivery. If by chance it does not, or you are sending an unsolicited resume, I suggest cutting and pasting your plain text resume contents into the body of your email.

The other option, which can work best at times, is to both paste your resume content into the body of the email as well as attach it for their convenience. The one drawback for this option is that you increase the possibility of the email getting deleted because it has an attachment. Some businesses automatically delete outside emails that have attachments for fear of viruses.

2. Not following-up with potential employers

It is extremely important to follow-up immediately after your interview. In the current work environment, either traditional printed and mailed thank you letters or emails are appropriate. Sending a thank you follow-up has these positive outcomes:

- [] Your interviewer will be reminded of who you are.
- [] You have a chance to reiterate your desire for the position and highlight your qualifications.
- [] The majority of people do not send thank you follow-ups, so you will be ahead of the applicants when it comes down to deciding.

3. Not testing job search engines with various keywords to find the most effective method that yields the jobs you are targeting

Each job search site has a different search engine for finding jobs. What might work for Monster.com, may not be the best method for Headhunter.net. Spend time upfront testing different keywords to find out what yields the most accurate results. If you are looking for a direct marketing manager position, try the following terms: marketing, direct marketing, marketing manager, manager and so on. You'll be surprised at the differences in search results.

4. Posting your resume on sites without regard to privacy

This is a major mistake especially if you are currently employed. There are different levels of privacy with online resume databases. The one with the least amount of privacy is an open database that allows anyone online to access and view your resume.

On the other end of the spectrum, there are databases where you control who can view your resume. You assign a password, which is needed in order to gain access to your information. There are also databases that only show your experience and do not show your personal information such as name and address.

Of course, there are drawbacks to posting your resume. If you are currently employed and want to keep your job search confidential, you may not want to post your resume for everyone to see. There are options on most job posting sites where you choose the levels of privacy you want, and exclude certain companies from possibly seeing your resume.

5. Not spending the appropriate amount of time preparing your resume and cover letter before emailing

Just because the Internet allows you to do certain aspects of job searching much faster than in the past, it doesn't mean you should skimp on proofreading and targeting. It's very easy to send out 5 resumes in 15 minutes, but don't do it.

When writing your resume, continually ask yourself if the reader would be interested in what you are writing. If the job is for a very specific programming position and you have past experience in Information Technology and also non-profit fundraising, you probably don't need to relay the latter part on your resume. Instead of adding a few lines about your fundraising experience, take a few extra lines to add one of your past programming positions to emphasize what you accomplished.

6. Not checking your email daily and/or returning phone calls in order to respond quickly to inquiries

This is a common sense principle of any job search. Be respectful of people's time by responding within 24 hours of any contact.

7. Not using search agents offered on job sites

You shouldn't rely solely on this option, but it is a good complement to your regular search. Many job search sites such as Monster.com and Hotjobs.com offer job search agents that send you emails with targeted jobs of interest. The majority are free to sign up and easy to use. Why do all the work yourself? Have these search agents send emails at regular intervals of your choice to your home email address. Saves you precious time.

8. Not asking for the interviewer's business card after an interview

Send a thank you follow-up with 24 hours and keep it short.

9. Not printing out job descriptions and staying organized

Follow these steps when applying for jobs both, online and offline.

- * As soon as you send out a resume, print or cut out the job description.

- * Create a "to follow-up" folder and place the printed job description with the sent date in the folder.

- * Create a "followed-up" folder and place the printed job descriptions with commentary on the back of the page or attached to the description of when you followed up and what are the next steps.

- * Create an "active folder" for any jobs where you have had a phone interview or actually went to the company for an interview.

- * Lastly, create a "archive folder" where you place all jobs that have been filled or jobs which you have followed up numerous times and have not heard back over the past 3 months.

I have found the third bullet point to be a key part of the online job search. Sometimes you will receive an automatic email reply back from an employer stating they received your information, but other times you are left wondering if your information was ever received. Because of this, I have always recommended sending a follow-up email 3-4 weeks after your initial email was sent to the employer.

10. Getting frustrated and down on yourself when the going gets tough

You need to be a salesperson. Sell yourself. Don't accept the first negative response as a rejection, continue to move forward.

The job market can be tough at times and some people may get frustrated because they have not received as many responses as expected. From my experience, here is what tends to happen:

- * Probably 20% of the positions are never filled due to various internal and external reasons. Jobs are put on hold. Companies decide they don't have money in the budget, etc.

- * Approximately 25% are filled internally, but had to be advertised to the public due to corporate policies.

With these assumptions, that leaves a job applicant with a little more than 50% of an opportunity to get a call for an interview. Don't get angry if you have been rejected for interviews or don't get many callbacks.

Keep a positive attitude when going through difficult job search times. Edit resumes and cover letters with recent feedback. Continue to move forward and your hard work will be rewarded. Your next resume you send out could be the one that gets you that perfect job.

About the Author: Paul Fontaine

Paul is the author of the new ebook: How to Find the Perfect Job...in 30 days or less! Paul has extensive experience in marketing, public relations, advertising and publishing. His previous work experience has been with such well-known companies as Time-Life Books and The Franklin Mint. Paul has been published in various industry publications, both on and offline.

He has been giving career advice for over ten years. Paul has reviewed and critiqued hundreds of resumes and has helped create more effective communication tools to attract employer's attention and to find that perfect job. He has been on both sides of the desk as an interviewer and an interviewee.

Paul has studied in the U.S. and China. He received an undergraduate degree in Business Administration with an emphasis in Marketing and Communication from the University of Rhode Island. In addition, Paul has an M.B.A. from Villanova University in Pennsylvania.

Paul is President of Easy Online Guides, a business dedicated to creating and distributing high quality, easy-to-understand, how-to guides in an inexpensive and fast manner for online consumers. Go to www.easyonlineguides.com for more information.

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