



Internet Job Search

Do Your Job Search Online

The internet has now become the go-to resource for job seekers beginning their job search. According to a 2015 Pew Research poll, 90% of recent job seekers have looked for jobs online, and 84% applied for jobs online.¹

This job-seeking landscape can be extremely convenient for both job seekers and employers, as long as you know how to use these tools effectively. If you are used to classified ads, help wanted signs, or have only been casually browsing for jobs online, there are a few things to note before diving into an internet job search.

According to job search expert Alison Doyle, "An online job seeker will need basic tools prior to starting the job search." These tools would include access to a computer (or smartphone) with internet access, an email account to communicate with employers, and a resume that you can easily transfer to an online setting.

Creating a Resume for Online Use

Among other sources, rileyguide.com recommends preparing your resume in 3 different formats to best make use of online resources:

A PDF document – This format

Other recommendations from Doyle include having clear goals that include the type of position you are interested in, a salary range and geographic area. "If you're not sure about your career objective, spend some time exploring options prior to starting a search," she recommends. One good way to do this is through Doyle's site *About.com* at: jobsearch.about.com/cs/careerresources/index.htm

She also suggests that job seekers look at "career niche sites" that focus on their areas of interest (for example, techies.com for those in information technology).

Job seekers should have an Internet-ready scannable resume. That means a resume that can be electronically scanned into an applicant-tracking database. Gone are the bullet points, esoteric type-fonts, and action verbs that have been part and parcel of the

¹ <http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/11/19/1-the-internet-and-job-seeking/>

resume of the (recent) past; employers' computers don't like the first two, and descriptive nouns are more helpful to the job seeker than verbs. San serif fonts are preferred; italics, script fonts, and underlining should be avoided (again, the computers don't like them). Similarly, no lines, boxes, graphics, or tables need apply. While industry buzzwords (the terminology used only by "insiders" in a particular field) have been advised against in the past, they definitely have a place in the era of the scannable resume! Using industry-appropriate buzzwords may help a computer identify you as a potential candidate.

In short, the final document should have lots of white space, be simply laid out, with concrete information about your background, skills, and experience. To be used (sparingly) and, according to Medtronic's instructions to job seekers, "Information you wish to highlight can be CAPITALIZED, but the letters should not touch each other."

Julie Friedman, corporate employment manager at Medtronic, said the Internet has become a crucial employment recruitment method for the Minneapolis-based medical technology company. On the Medtronic home page, the link to "career opportunities" is prominently displayed. Once the user goes to that area, they can learn about current job opportunities, career development, employee benefits, and more. You can apply for a job on the spot or e-mail the opening to a friend.

Friedman said that Medtronic also posts open positions on some of the premier job boards as well as on what she terms "niche sites" (those that cater to a specific industry; in the case of Medtronic, Friedman posts openings on sites geared to the medical technology industry). Medtronic recruiters also search job board databases for applicants.

"The Internet is a phenomenal recruitment source, and it's growing," Friedman said, adding that recruitment is one of the major goals of Medtronic's web site.

Resume in hand (or, more accurately, on your hard drive), many job seekers turn first to online national job boards. Popular job boards including *monster.com*, *nationjob.com*, and *careerbuilder.com*. Each job board has something different to offer: Some allow you to post your resume in addition to searching for jobs; some will search for you and e-mail you with prospects. Some allow you to post your resume in addition to searching for jobs; some will search for you and e-mail you with prospects. Some offer career coaching and online chats with job search professionals and other job seekers.

It was one of these online chats that helped Sharon Landry (not her real name) find a new job. "I really didn't know anything about looking for a job online," said Landry,

and accountant. "I saw an ad for *monster.com*, and I thought, why not? I was impressed with the number of jobs they had listed. I started to look at other job boards, and I got brave enough to post my resume. I got some nibbles, but nothing I was really thrilled about. And then I was "talking" to someone on line—we have become e-mail buddies because we were in the same field and both lived in the Twin Cities. She was looking for a new job because she wanted to relocate. She liked her current employer a lot, and when she finally gave notice, I was first in line. I had her recommendation, and I got the job. I've never been Internet savvy, but now I am sold on using the Internet as a job search tool!"

Landry's experience wasn't totally positive, however; she admits she would have done well to follow Doyle's advice about having a home computer. Her then-employer discovered she was using her work computer to find a job, and she was nearly fired—before she had a new position lined up.

"As naïve as I was initially about Internet job searching, it never occurred to me that my Internet use, could be monitored, even though it was in my employee manual," she said. "I was pretty sure that I would be leaving, but I didn't want to do so under a cloud. I was able to negotiate a positive departure, but I still feel uneasy when I think about it. I wish I'd done things differently, even though I am beyond thrilled with my new job." Most large and midsize employers routinely monitor employees' Internet use.

It isn't just large employers who find the Internet useful in filling employment needs. Chrysalis, A Center for Women, a nonprofit based in Minneapolis, has fewer than 60 employees. Director of Administration Debbie Ekeren said she has seen the Internet "skyrocket" as a recruitment source.

"Four years ago, we weren't even online. Today, we routinely post openings on local job boards such as the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits and United Way JobLine. If someone is interested in Chrysalis, they can use our web site to learn about openings and the agency; and we accept resumes via e-mail" Ekeren has especially noticed growth in Internet-based recruiting in the past six months.

She does see a drawback though: Sometimes applicants who see Chrysalis jobs online don't notice the closing date for a position, and apply long after positions have closed, in part because job boards are not always updated in a timely manner.

What if you're not looking for a full-time permanent job? What if you're neither a corporate nor nonprofit type? Can the Internet still help you find work? Absolutely, according to Jean Peterson, president of One Stop Staffing, a Forest Lake-based talent

leasing agency that provides consumer product companies and national marketing firms with management and staffing for event marketing promotion. Its web site at www.onestopstaffing.com provides information about actors, model, signers, and other available talent. In the works are plans to use the site to allow the leased employees to network, learn new skills, and search for jobs.

“The Internet has proven to be an optimal platform to bring our clients and talent together,” Peterson noted, adding that the web site, still in its testing phase, has provided both time and cost reductions.

As important as the Internet can be, Doyle reminds job seekers not to overlook their local newspaper’s classified section. “Networking is still the top method of finding a job,” she added.

Landry, whose contacts online led her to her new job, agreed with Doyle, but only to a point. “I found my job through networking, but without the Internet I never would have made the contacts I used for networking. I call it ‘Internetworking.’ And if it worked for me, it can work for anybody.”

Online job boards—too much of a not-so-good thing?

Adapted from an article by Michele St. Martin for *Minnesota Women’s Press*.

In 1998 there were an estimated 28,000,000 job openings posted online; more than 2,500 websites offered job-posting services. Most sites offer some anonymity (you can delete your name and/or employer from public view or block certain employers from accessing your information). Most have some information about the job search itself, and most offer you the opportunity to search through job listings by field and location.

Irresistible or overwhelming? The quality of these sites varies widely. Here are a few that the Minnesota Women’s Press recommends.

Monster Board

One of the most widely visible and popular sites, Monster tries to be all things to all people—and they do it pretty well. Need a resume? Create up to five of them with Monster’s help. You can store your resume for your own use, or post it so that employers can view it, too. Monster will e-mail job leads to you. You can exchange ideas with others through Monster’s career chats and message boards, view hundred of thousands of jobs, read about trends in your field, get career advice, and more. Surf on over to www.monster.com. There’s nothing scary about it.

NationJob Network

NationJob Network is consistently ranked highest among top online job boards in customer satisfaction. One of its most popular features is the P.J. Scout database, which allows job seekers to fine tune their interests and needs; the database delivers job openings via e-mail as they occur. NationsJob's community job sites allow job seekers to search in specific communities, and this feature includes helpful community information. Go to www.nationjob.com.

Minnesota Workforce

In addition of thousands of job listings throughout Minnesota, this site, run by the Minnesota Department of Economic Security, is a veritable treasure trove of resources, including links to information about job fairs throughout the state, information about occupations, including skills and workplace requirements; links to the national Occupational Outlook Handbook, to professional associations, newspapers and libraries throughout Minnesota. Also provided is information about unemployment insurance, disability services, and support services such as transportation and day care. Point your browser to www.mnworkforcecenter.org.

Net Etiquette

Introduction

A *internet* is an opportunity to converse interactively with one or several persons.

Netiquette

There are a lot of idiosyncrasies and some obvious etiquettes about using the Internet. But keep in mind you are using faceless/voiceless communications:

No one can see your face

When communicating over the Net no one can see you, including your:

- ❑ body language
- ❑ voice tones
- ❑ feelings

Written communication tends to have more impact than verbal communication. Without the nonverbal components missing, the words take on more meaning. It may be necessary to understate things to convey the correct level of feeling.

To help communicate feelings use smileys. Some common ones (there is a long list of used expressions) are the following:

- :-) happy or kidding
- ;-) sarcasm or joking
- :-O surprise
- :-(unhappy or mad

Some Do's and Don'ts

- ❑ Use your manners
- ❑ Give as well as receive; share information
- ❑ Explore and learn
- ❑ Be considerate of busy times, at sites and on
- ❑ Don't clog up mailing lists and newsgroups
- ❑ Don't be intimidated by know-it-alls

- ❑ Don't expect to spoon-fed, but if you need help ask for it
- ❑ DON'T USE ALL CAPS! It looks like shouting and is irritating
- ❑ Don't trust everyone on the meet, just as in real life there are creeps on the Net
- ❑ Don't be a jerk

Flame Wars

Conflicts do happen on the Net and can erupt into flame wars. Flames are combative messages, usually via e-mail or newsgroups, which run the gamut from a fairly tame exchange of insults to some very vicious things. Generally, what separates a strongly expressed opinion from a flame is the motive of the writer. If the intent is to insult, abuse, or degrade someone, it is a flame.

You can choose whether to respond or not to a flame. You, also, can choose to keep it going and growing or to let it die. It is true that flame wars are generally harmless (sticks and stones and all that jazz), but they can be a bit painful.

However, keep in mind that although we generally think of ourselves on the Net as being somewhat anonymous, it is possible to determine who we are. One story relates of one case where the flamee, by using the flamer's ID, found out where the flamer worked and called his boss to tell him about how his employee was using the Net and misrepresenting his company.