



Pennsylvania CareerLink

BERKS COUNTY

USING THE INTERNET FOR YOUR JOB SEARCH

NOVEMBER 2011

In this November edition of the job seeker newsletter, find tips, suggestions, and ideas on how to make the most of your job search on the Internet. Also, see up-coming events for veterans. And don't forget that Friday, November 11th is Veterans Day! Take a moment to say thanks to a local veteran for their service to our country. Staff at the PA CareerLink® Berks County hope you will find this newsletter informative and helpful in your job search.

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Making your Online Job Search Successful

By Ashley Membreño

Applying for jobs online can be a daunting task. There are literally hundreds of websites that offer job listings, from the local newspaper, to temp agencies, and the ever-popular job board websites like Monster and Career Builder. While the manner in which a job seeker applies for a job has changed with the advent of the computer and the Internet, many of the basic principles remain the same.

It is important to keep track of usernames and passwords for various websites. This becomes increasingly more difficult if you sign up for numerous job board websites and post a resume on each. One option is to use a website that allows you to look at numerous job board websites and simply narrow your search by geographical location and job keyword. One website that makes this possible is the Job Spidering website (www.paworkstats.state.pa.us). This Pennsylvania Labor Market Information System website allows you to type in your zip code, choose a certain distance from that zip code, and enter a keyword to perform your job search. This can cut down the time it takes to find viable job postings, since you are in essence looking at various sites from one single location.

A second option to simplify the time it takes to locate a job on the Internet is to subscribe to the email notifications offered by most job search websites. This allows a job seeker to choose certain criteria for a job first and then submit an email address to be notified when a new job is posted meeting this criteria. Rather than spending hours surfing the web and reading through hundreds of job descriptions, an applicant can receive an email with just a few jobs listed that match the job preferences of the job-seeker.

Another suggestion to make the Internet job search successful is to develop a system to keep track of the companies and websites where an application has been submitted or a resume had been posted. For the tech savvy job seeker, a good idea is to develop a spread sheet or some other kind of tracking system on the computer to keep a record of all the applications. Of course, keeping track with good old-fashioned paper and pen is also a good strategy. Having information on hand if a company calls about a particular job can mean the difference between scoring an interview or flubbing the opportunity.

A final step in making an online job search successful is for a job seeker to continually update and refresh the information posted on job boards and social media websites. If a recruiter or employer is searching for a job seeker with certain skills or qualifications, they will be looking for the most recently added or updated resumes or profiles. Even if a job seeker is chronically unemployed, updating a job description or specific skill on these sites can bring fresh interest to that individual. It is also a good idea for every job seeker to Google themselves. This will reveal what an employer might see about a potential job candidate. If there is anything embarrassing or incorrect, take actions to change what comes up in the search. The most likely culprit is online social network sites. Please see the article "The Pitfalls of Social Networking" to get more suggestions and ideas on social networking websites.

Searching for a job in the Internet age can be frustrating, but if a few steps are taken, it can also be rewarding. The Internet allows companies to look for job seekers from all over the world and tap into the most diversified pool of candidates. Staying focused on career goals, writing a keyword-laden resume, and keeping track of online applications can help a job seeker successfully navigate online job opportunities.

Internet Friendly Resumes

By Jeremy Bender

Years ago a resume needed to be visually appealing and easy to read with the simple choice being to hand-write or type it. Now the job market has gotten much more complicated. More than 95% of large companies and a growing number of smaller employers now use computers to receive, store, and sort the countless resumes they receive. This trend has created a whole new generation of rules and procedures for job seekers to follow.

There are certain universal requirements all Internet resumes live by. If possible keep resumes to two pages or less. Use simple fonts like Arial, Courier, or Times New Roman and use consistent type sizes. Stay away from fancy formatting like tables, fonts, templates, graphical text boxes and lines, headers, footers, and inconsistent tab layouts. Make sure the résumé is left-justified with minimal tabs used. When uploading a resume, the format is sometimes changed, which throws justifications, tabs, and spacing off.

If a resume must be sent by email, paste the resume in the body of the email. The resume can be included as an attachment as well, but never send it only as an attachment. Sometimes employers can't open attachments or simply won't for fear of downloading viruses and malware.

When loading a resume make sure to save it under a simple but distinct name. Hiring managers sorting through 200+ Resume.Doc files would probably appreciate the occasional Smith, Jon Resume.Doc. It makes it easier for them to find your resume when needed and at the very least distinguishes it from the crowd. Follow these rules and you will have an Internet friendly resume that can be emailed or uploaded with a minimum of fuss.

Now that the basics have been covered, consider some more general resume rules. Make sure the contact information is at the top, current, and complete. The best resume in the world means nothing if it has the wrong phone number or an old address and the employer can't contact you. *Use professional email addresses only. While DiscoKing32@genericemail.com is probably the life of the party, most employers will be less than impressed.*

Customize your resume for the employer and use nouns instead of verbs. With Internet resumes it is common for employers to scan resumes for keywords. For example if you have "drove truck" in your resume a keyword scan for a "commercial truck driver" will not recognize that experience. Additionally, the production job you are applying for will not care about your driving experience. List experience related to the job you are applying for and use keywords or industry jargon. To help with this visit O*NET (<http://www.onetonline.org/>) online for keywords and job descriptions or review the job posting itself to identify what employers are looking for.

Proofread the resume! This is not a suggestion. Most employers will reject a resume outright if they see more than two misspellings or other grammatical errors. The worst scenario would be for the resume to make it past the initial scan and be on the short list of potential applications only to be rejected the first time a hiring manager lays eyes on it. Get a second pair of eyes to proofread it if possible, but at the very least do not just click past the spell check. It is there for a reason.

With these tips you will be able to produce a quality resume that serves you well in both hardcopy and online. Any readers still concerned about their resumes or who just want a new perspective please visit your local PA CareerLink for further resume assistance.



“Most employers will reject a resume outright if they see more than two misspellings or other grammatical errors.”



Where does My Resume go When I Apply Online?

By Ashley Membreno

The way a job seeker looks for and applies to jobs has changed significantly with the integration of the computer and Internet into everyday living. It is now more common for job seekers to apply online for job openings than to mail out paper applications. With the click of a mouse, a jobseeker has access to hundreds of thousands of jobs all around the globe. Websites such as Monster, CareerBuilder, and SnagaJob have cropped up with hundreds of spawn-off sites to entice job seekers to register and apply using a specific website. This computerized approach to finding a job has some job seekers wondering “Where does my resume go when I apply online?”

Technology has made our lives easier in many realms, from shopping to keeping in touch with far-flung friends and family and even getting quick answers to trivial questions. However, for a job seeker sitting in front of a computer screen and typing up a resume or entering data in page after page of online applications, it seems like technology is working against them. Many times, resumes and applications seem doomed to an eternity lost in cyberspace, never making it to the appropriate hiring professional. When the economy crumbled, employers were inundated with hundreds of resumes and applications from newly unemployed job seekers. To help these companies wade through the poor applicants to find the desirable ones, they turned to an applicant tracking system (ATS). This allows companies to manage large volumes of information as well as track communication with every applicant. A hiring professional simply types in a keyword or phrase and the tracking system spits out candidates whose resumes reflect this keyword.

While application tracking systems greatly reduce and relieve the amount of work the human resources department has to handle, for job seekers it can be frustrating to navigate. In fact, some job seekers lament the loss of the human touch when searching for a job. It is important to remember that in this technological age, computers are here to stay. Therefore, it is important to know how to use technology by learning how to adapt to the new applicant tracking systems.

There are some things that can be done to make sure a resume passes the applicant tracking system test and gets read by a live human being. First, make sure that the resume is simple. This means that it does not have any fancy formatting or fonts and that it is saved as a Word document (preferably Word 97 or 2003 – sometimes the systems cannot read Word 2007 documents). See the article “Internet Friendly Resumes” for more details and suggestions on how to create a simple, Internet-ready resume.

Another way to get a resume noticed through the applicant tracking systems is to make sure to use plenty of industry-specific keywords. The more words on the resume that match to the specific job an applicant is applying to, the more likely the applicant tracking system is to pull up that resume in a match. Also, keep in mind, that generally the ATS will read only the first 100 words of a resume, so it is best to place all the keywords in the top half of the document.

Each job seeker will have to adapt their job search to meet the ever-changing needs of the technological world. Learning how to successfully navigate through the Internet to apply for a job will multiply the probability of success for a job seeker. Make the most of the technology available and write a resume that is compatible to the applicant tracking system. No one wants their resume lost in cyberspace.

Tips for Online Applications

By Mike Dopkin

The Internet has drastically changed the job search process for many people. Using the Internet allows the job seeker to find dozens, if not hundreds of positions quickly. In many cases it is the only avenue in which the employer will accept applications and resumes for advertised positions. Knowing how to navigate online job applications is an important aspect to conquer in order to be considered a candidate for a new position.





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[Continued from page 3] As with just about anything job-search related, an up-to-date resume is the foundation. Please refer to the Article titled “Internet Friendly Resumes” for the proper formatting of an online resume and other tips.

When the job seeker uses the Internet as part of their job search they will quickly realize the same information is requested on many different applications. A lot of this information is on the resume. In some cases, once a resume is uploaded, the information will populate onto the application. Be sure to double check the information in the text boxes and make any necessary formatting changes.

For information that does not self-populate, or is not on the resume, it is a good idea to keep a document handy with the following information: previous employer’s name and address, dates of employment, supervisor’s name, title and phone number. Also, keep track of any certifications or achievements you have earned. Maintaining a list with this information will save time and the hassle of looking it up for each application.

Many applications ask for a summary of responsibilities. In this section of the application, organize job duties into a small paragraph. While it might seem redundant to fill out the responsibilities section after up-loading a resume, it is not a good idea to just copy and paste the same information from the resume. Instead, add valid examples of skills or describe in more detail the job duties. Remember to add keywords applicable to the job title.

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ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT UPGRADING YOUR
SKILLS?
HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT TRAINING FOR A NEW
CAREER?**

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**This US Department of Labor funding requires that you meet certain eligibility criteria. The staff member at the orientation will tell you about those requirements and what you need to do to apply.*

It is also a good idea to keep multiple copies of all this information. It can be very frustrating to put a lot of time and work into a resume, cover letter or other supporting information then lose the only copy. It is advisable to have an electronic backup of these documents saved in multiple places, such as on a flash drive or on Google Docs. Also keep a few hard copies of the information as well. At least with a hard copy, if something happens to the electronic version(s), the job seeker will not have to reinvent everything.

Applying online does not have to feel like reinventing the wheel for every job site and application. Follow the above steps to simplify the online job application process so every resume gets into the hands of the hiring manager

Avoiding the Pitfalls of Social Networking Websites

By
Dopkin

Mike

Social networking websites, such as Facebook, are a fun way to stay connected or reconnect with friends and family. Some networking sites are designed to help enhance or create a professional network. LinkedIn is an example of a professional networking site. But for the job seeker, networking sites can be a double-edged sword. The sites can be beneficial to a person’s job search, but in some circumstances the sites can work against a job seeker. Here are some things to keep in mind about online profiles.

Controlling an online reputation will take some work but there are steps that can be taken to make it easier. First, all pictures that might offend the employer or recruiter should be removed. The picture of a group of friends playing cards and having a beer might not seem like a big deal, but an employer might think differently. Why take the chance and leave the picture posted for public view? It is also important to monitor what friends are posting on their own sites as well. Even though there is no controlling what pictures friends post, users can control the tags of themselves. If someone posts a picture and tags another friend, the friend will have the option of removing the tag. It is imperative to take the time to understand how the security settings for the website work and set security levels to the appropriate privacy settings. Finally, keep on top of the changes the site makes to these security settings.

Social networking sights focused on fun are potentially the most damaging for job seekers because of the nature of the site, but professional networking sights can be harmful as well. When a job seeker joins a site like LinkedIn they need to make sure the information shows them in the best light. Leaving a half-completed profile or work history might not seem like a mistake, but it could give the wrong impression to the employer. Remember, the idea is to give a prospective employer the best impression possible and an incomplete profile may tell the employer the job seeker is careless .

It should not be a surprise to any job seeker that most organizations will run a pre-employment background check on a candidate. What might shock some people is the fact that many employers and recruiters are conducting a web search on the applicant. A candidate can be eliminated from consideration because of what is found online. Every job seeker should be sure to “Google” themselves to see what the search produces.

Networking websites can be a great tool for someone looking for employment. The sites can open up a tremendous number of opportunities for the job seeker. As long as they remain cognizant of their online profile, the sites can help minimize the length of time someone is out of work or looking for a new career.

Future Veterans Event!

PA CareerLink® Berks County will be hosting a Veterans get-together in March 2010. This is a great opportunity for Veterans and Spouses of Veterans to attend an informational session to learn about job seeker resources and various subjects related to Veteran concerns.

Date and time to be announced



Don't miss our next newsletter with tips on how to master the art of interviewing!

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