

Think Before You Click - Tips for Applying for Jobs Online

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Searching for a job online can feel overwhelming and stressful. At times, you may wonder why no one is getting back to you. Take a few moments out before you “click submit”. Be sure to follow these tips of what to and not to do when applying for a job online.

Do not...

1. Apply For Just Any Position You See Available.

Instead...

Carefully read through the job specs (line by line). Be realistic and honest with yourself. Ask yourself, “Do my credentials match the job specs?” For example, if you have worked in healthcare marketing, applying for an IT position in the automotive industry would not be a good fit. Lynn Hazan, President of Lynn Hazan & Associates, states, “If your resume matches 90% of the job specs, the likelihood increases that you would be a viable candidate for the position.”

2. Submit Resumes That Resemble A Job Description.

Instead...

Showcase your accomplishments. A job description summarizes general tasks in the present tense. Resumes are past tense and should tell stories of the impacts you have made. For example, did you solve any problems, save the company money, or win any awards? If so, include these highlights. Be specific; include metrics, case stories, etc.

3. Apply For Jobs That Are Over Your Head.

Instead...

Examine the core skills that are needed for success in this position. For example, if you have no background in writing, do not apply for a writing based position. Next, verify the level of expertise. Recent college graduates should not apply for a director level position. Instead, apply for a job at an entry-level position (e.g. 0 -1 years of experience). Lynn Hazan states, “Use your time wisely. The closer your background is to the job specs, the better the chances of being considered.”

Do...

1. Showcase Your Tech Strengths.

Listing talents such as web design and Adobe Creative Suite will give you added advantage. Include your level of proficiency. You never know when your expertise will be needed. Working at my HR recruiting internship, I was able to utilize my Photoshop abilities to create a banner for Twitter's new layout. It felt great that I was able to contribute to the company. According to Lynn Hazan, "The more tools you have in your toolbox, the more valuable the candidate will be to a potential employer."

2. Create An Online Presence On Social Media.

Building an online presence is another method of setting yourself apart. Social media has allowed employees and candidates to be more interactive. Make the most use out of sites such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter. Ask colleagues for recommendations and create content on SlideShare. Be cautious of what you post. Lynn Hazan states, "Employers will check your LinkedIn and Facebook profiles. How do you want to be seen?"

3. Create A Portfolio.

A portfolio showcases your work samples in a professional way. Examples could include: press releases, design work, reports, etc. Consider an online portfolio for easy access. Many sites are free and user friendly such as Weebly, WIX and Word Press.

4. Make Sure Your Materials Are Letter Ready.

Before you press the send button, keep in mind that this is a first impression. Be mindful of your tone of voice in your correspondence. Remain professional and do not use slang. Finally, double and triple check your resumes and cover letters for typos. You don't want to be disqualified for errors.