

How To Stand Out In A Tough Job Market

Let The Internet Power Your Job Search

by Regina Lewis

(NAPSA)—Fruitless resumé mailings, unanswered messages, awkward interviews—these are all familiar frustrations if you've ever looked for work in today's tough job market. But whether



Regina Lewis

you're searching for your first job or for a new one—a better alternative may be just a few key-strokes away.

The Internet can shave hours, days and even weeks off your job search. After all, finding the right job is all about doing the painstaking research of identifying and following up on prospective leads. By making it easier to zero in on prospects that best match your skills and interests, the Internet simplifies the process. And with the Web's nationwide reach, you cannot only learn about jobs close to home, but in other cities that may have considerable relocation appeal.

Here are some tips and expert advice on how the Internet can give you a competitive edge in today's tough market and help you land your next job:

1. Scour Online Listings. Put down the newspaper and click onto job sites like Career Builder.com and AOL's Find A Job Channel. These offer access to over 400,000-plus job listings from more than 25,000 employers—the virtual equivalent of reading the want ads from newspapers across the country. Whether you're looking for a \$10-an-hour part time job or trying to snag a six-figure position, the postings are plentiful and there's no recycling involved.

2. Get a "We're Hiring" Heads Up. For a leg up on your competitors, sign up for Job Alerts, which will notify you when a job opening is posted that meets your criteria. For instance, AOL Job Alerts will

come directly to you by Instant Message, via e-mail or even on your cell phone.

3. Forgo the Formula Approach and Customize. Forget forwarding the same resumé to everyone on your list. Instead, customize your resumé to specific job openings whenever possible. A recent job site survey found 71 percent of hiring managers preferred résumés customized to their open positions, and an appropriate cover letter. (AOL's Find A Job Channel lets you save different versions of your resumé.)

4. Keywords are Key. Use keywords to describe your skills that match the job posting. Types of keywords that should be included are technical knowledge, results that you have achieved and your relevant personal qualities, such as being self-motivated. Also, describe your experience using nouns, as resumé scanners used by recruiters tend to search by nouns more often than verbs. Example: instead of writing "managing projects," say "project manager."

5. Keep it Simple. Forget the fluff—ornate designs often don't translate well as online submissions so keep them simple and straightforward. Once you have posted your resumé online, check it and see how it looks, review it for typos and whether or not it is formatted correctly. When you do need to send your resumé by e-mail, use simple text in the body of e-mail rather than as an attachment. Many companies will delete e-mail attachments as a matter of policy (at worst the file could have a virus, at best it takes the employer more time to scan your resumé).

To learn more, including how to find and apply for jobs online, visit the Find A Job Channel at AOL Keyword: Find a Job.

Regina Lewis is an online consumer advisor for America Online.