

Ask the Career Coach: Do People Look at Resumes on the Internet?

They do, but here are some tips to help get your resume get noticed.

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Dear Career Coach Lisa,

Maybe you could guide me on how to find a job. My husband has been laid off and he is really struggling to find a job. It seems the only way to get into somewhere is to go on line and apply. Does anyone really look at these resumes?

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There are many reasons companies post jobs on the Internet. The primary reason is to be able to identify the qualified candidates for consideration. Another reason is to reach populations they may not have through word of mouth. And another reason is for compliance.

The Internet provides organizations with the ability to tap passive candidates. A passive candidate is one that is not in an active job search, is typically working and looking only if something interesting captures their attention.

When a company makes a posting for compliance purposes, they post the position for a selected time period to review potential candidates when there may already be a candidate identified. This allows the hiring manager to say he has done their due diligence in making the job available to the general public.

There are job postings that remain circulating on various networking groups when the position has been filled some time ago. The viral posting and recirculation of positions can be challenging to impossible to control. I have seen some organizations reply to submissions informing clients that the position was closed some time ago and would the applicant please help inform the group the position is no longer available.

When a company advertises an opening in today's market, the volume of resumes that come in is tremendous. To filter through all of the candidates can take a lot of resources.

Answering advertisements on the Internet often leads to a great deal of frustration due to the one way nature of the communication and the knowledge there is no way of knowing what happened to your resume. One way to avoid these difficulties and to come to a true understanding of whether a job opening is real and whether your application is being considered is through social networking.

Social networking involves actively looking for a contact within a target company in order to have a less anonymous presence associated with your resume. Getting referred is typically a stronger way to connect into a company. Social networking can help to clarify if there is indeed an opportunity available and if you are qualified.

It can also move your resume from the pile into a special category of consideration that requires the recruiter to notify both you and the person referring you regarding your status. It generally results in a more careful review of your qualifications. In the end, even if you do not get the job, you will have made a new connection or strengthened a relationship with an old acquaintance that may help you with your search. The new connection may extend their network to assist you if you establish a rapport. Establishing new contacts helps expand your prospects of finding a job considerably.

How you grow and cultivate these relationships over time is where you will see the true benefits in social networking and ultimately career development. People typically refer people they like to work with when an opportunity presents either at their own organization or to a friend seeking talent for another organization. You want to create a rapport that enables your contacts to know what you are up to and what you enjoy and want. It allows them to refer you naturally.

About this column: "Ask the Career Coach" is a column dedicated to those who may be in transition or wrestling with a career dilemma by providing a forum for advice. We welcome your questions. Please send them to CareerCoachLisa@gmail.com. Lisa Chenofsky Singer is a Millburn-Short Hills resident and the founder of Chenofsky Singer & Associates LLC. She offers Executive and Career Management Coaching and Human Resources Consulting, writes and speaks on job search and career-related topics. Her web site is www.ChenofskySinger.com.