

NOT YOUR GRANDPARENT'S APPLICATION PROCESS

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As technology has evolved, it has dramatically changed how we apply to jobs.

Job boards like AgCareers.com would have never existed 25 years ago. When you were looking for a job, you opened up the newspaper classifieds or went by the main office to turn in an application. Now you use web sites and e-mail your resume. Some companies use an online screening tool to assess candidates before they lay eyes on the candidate or their resume.

With so many new techniques, the more you know, the better you can navigate through them to the internship or the first job of your dreams.

HOW IS AN ONLINE RESUME DIFFERENT?

An online resume is merely an electronic copy of your resume that you have available to employers via the World Wide Web. Now that more and more employers are utilizing the internet to find candidates, having an electronic resume handy is a must.

Job boards like AgCareers.com and the ones available to you through your school, will have the capability to include your resume in their database. Having your resume in a searchable database is one example of an online resume.

Some databases will allow you to upload a particular file type like Word, PDF or Publisher, the most common of these being Microsoft Word. Other databases will ask you to copy and paste your resume into their system. In those situations your resume may not maintain all of the formatting like bolding, bulleting, and font size.

This is nothing to be alarmed about since most employers are only viewing your resume based on a particular keyword they've searched for and where that appears in your resume. This brings up another point to keep in mind for online resumes:

Keywords. Employers search databases using keywords and phrases that match the job they are trying to fill. Take time to look at job postings for what you want to do, load your resume with some of those words and phrases where they match your experience.

applicant management and record keeping.

Most employers, especially larger companies who can have more than 100 job openings at a time, must keep detailed information about the people who apply to their jobs and who they consider for positions. This



Developing a resume that works on paper is one thing. Creating a resume that catches an employer's attention amongst hundreds of others online can be tricky. Think about formatting and make sure the content within the resume will be picked up when an employer is doing a keyword search.

Other outlets for posting your online resume can be via social media pages or personal web sites.

Regardless of where you post your resume, two important things to remember are: know where you have it posted so you don't sound shocked when contacted by a potential employer, and keep it updated.

Information on the web can be easily dated to show when it was last modified. Employers typically don't pay much attention to resumes that haven't been updated in three to six months.

ONLINE PROCESSES

The web has also allowed for companies to receive more applications for positions than ever before, and with that increase in applicants comes an increase in

is important for companies to remain compliant with Equal Employment Opportunity Laws.

By using an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) or Talent Management System (TMS), companies are better suited to manage resumes and applicant data in a central location.

The ATS technology is built into their corporate web site and will include an area to manage job postings and applicants. These systems can integrate with job boards like AgCareers.com to allow the companies to seamlessly post jobs from their corporate site to the job board.

As the applicant in the final stages of applying for a particular position, you'll be transitioned to a company-branded site to supply information and your resume.

The technology provided by ATS systems allows companies to sort applicants more quickly. Applicants who have pre-identified skills can be promptly graduated to the next step in the process.

ATS systems can also identify if a job seeker has applied for a particular job but may be better qualified for another position they may have available in the future. This is possible by examining qualifying questions that applicants answer as they fill out information on the company web site.

There are also ATS systems with built-in testing systems that put applicants through a pre-qualifying questionnaire to determine what strengths and qualities the applicant can bring to the role compared to other applicants.

As companies continue to look for tools that allow them to reduce the time it takes to fill needs within their organizations, we'll continue to see more ATS systems and other technologies for job seekers to use.

TIMELINES

In the "good ole days" when job seekers could just go to the corporate office and drop off their resume it may have been easier to keep in touch with the company and where they were in the process of looking at your resume.

But that has also changed with the use of technology in the job search process. With the web allowing for more and more people to know about and apply to a job, companies are extending the amount of time they collect applicants, which can increase quantity of applicants and the time they need to process those applications. E-mails and text messages have turned us into a society of instant feedback. We want to know right away if the company has our information and when our interview is and after that interview, we want to know if we have the job or not.

Depending on the company — some may still move that fast but when there can be forty plus applicants to consider, compared to maybe ten in the "good ole days," it may take longer for the feedback to come.

Some companies post jobs and as applicants apply they review their information and contact them within a day or two. Other companies may wait until the closing date on their job, and then spend a day or more going through all of the applicants at once.

Some companies will contact each person and confirm that they received their information and where the company is in the process of filling the role; some may contact each applicant and let them know if they will move on to the next round or not, and others may only contact those they intend to pursue further.

So while we'd like for the application process to be more like "Survivor" or "American Idol," where the most we have to wait to see who gets voted off is a week, in the job search process it may take a little longer.

PHONE INTERVIEWS

Another way that technology is changing how job seekers link with their next career is in the interview process.

Now that companies are finding applicants from all corners of the country or the world, and many have very tight budgets, more and more employers are conducting phone interviews. The phone interview may either be as a precursor to the face-to-face interview or as a replacement to the in-person interview. It is a much more cost affordable way for companies to consider more applicants for the role.

With the capabilities of cell phones, Skype, and other devices a whole new set of etiquette has emerged for phone interviewing. Here are a few points to remember if you find yourself scheduled for a phone interview:

- Think about what your ring back tone and voice mail portray about yourself. What may be funny to your friends or the catchy new song you love may not give the best first impression to a HR Manager calling about a potential job.



As prevalent as phone interviews are, so many hiring managers have examples of phone interviews gone bad. Take advantage of these few tips to help you excel and succeed at phone interviews.

- Unless you're sure your cell phone service is going to be perfect, consider using a landline rather than your cell phone to avoid a dropped call or static on the line.
- Have a copy of the job description, your resume and cover letter in front of you. It's like when the professor gives you an open book test — who wouldn't use the book?
- Be in a quiet place, you wouldn't take your dog to a face-to-face interview, so why should Fido be begging to go outside while you're trying to explain how your internship last summer prepared you for this job.
- Make sure your speaking directly into the phone, stand up it helps your voice to project better.
- Don't chew gum or snack during the interview and practice so you can avoid using other lingo you may easily use because of a more comfortable setting.

The way we look for jobs will only continue to change. New technologies are being invented everyday and some of those will impact how you find, apply and interview for your next job.

Hopefully after reading this article you feel a little more "in the know" about the processes recruiters are using to evaluate you for what could be the job of your dreams!