

THE NUMBER ONE MISTAKE MADE BY MOST JOB SEEKERS ... AND HOW TO AVOID MAKING IT!

by

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*To get your next job, you have to first **get in the game**. When a company gets 800+ resumes for an open position, how do you get in the game? To get in the game you have to be different from all of the other job seekers out there!*

Below is just ONE WAY to be different!

The **average person will look for a job 5-6 times in their lifetime**. The reasons vary but are usually for one of the following:

- A layoff
- Simply wanting to see “what is out there”
- To advance your career
- Family reasons
- A more desirable geography
- Current company is unstable and/or has a negative work environment
- And sometimes, more money

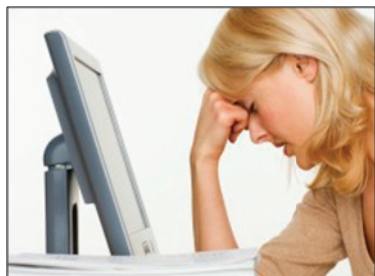
Almost invariably everyone, at some point, goes to the Internet, surfs the job boards, researches the open positions and applies online. There is actually nothing wrong with most of this approach.

The mistake is NOT:

- Going on the internet
- Or surfing the job boards
- Or researching the open positions

HERE IS ACTUALLY WHAT THE NUMBER ONE MISTAKE IS . . .

The **mistake is** actually electronically applying to the position online! That should NOT be your first action. **Applying online is your LAST resort. Otherwise you will not be different** and, unless you are lucky, you won't even be in the game (and we don't want a job search to be based upon luck!). *So what do you do?*



Apply to a position online *only* as a last resort. First, look for a sponsor!

Just as recently as two or three years ago you could reasonably expect to apply to a position through the Internet (job board), have a person on the “other end” review your resume, give it some thought and send you a response. The response usually was:

- An email, letter or postcard telling you your resume was received, reviewed and will be kept on file for future reference
- Or, an email was sent to you asking you to fill out an additional online application (which meant you were possibly advancing to the next level)
- Or, you would receive a phone call and have a phone interview

Today, here is what happens . . . and why you don’t hear back from most of the companies/positions you apply to:

1. Hundreds, if not thousands, of resumes are received for an open position. (Two examples: One position our recruiting firm recently posted received 809 online applications. One of our clients told me they received over 1,700 applications for a position they posted.)

FACT: There is only a **1% to 2%** probability that a company will fill a position with an online applicant.

2. The resumes, especially in the larger companies, are parsed (inhaled) into computers.
3. Staffing levels in Human Resources have been significantly cut.
4. So, with the doubling or tripling of the number of resumes received and HR staffs reduced, in the best case scenario, a resume will get a **30-45 second** review.
5. Once the resume is “inhaled”, key word searches are conducted. Thus, if the right key words aren’t in your resume, it stays “buried” in the computer—never to see the light of day again, no matter how many times you apply.
6. Sometimes you will receive a computer-generated response telling you that your resume was received. (But more often than not, you don’t receive anything.)
7. If you happen to be number 800 who applies and the company found the candidates they wanted to interview from among the first 200 who applied, you will never hear back, even if you are the most qualified. And yes, they will often keep the position posted sometimes even after the position is filled.
8. And if you are lucky, you will receive an email asking you to fill out an online application or maybe you will receive a phone call for a phone interview. (The “**phone interview,**” by the way, is a **trap!** It is one of the many “secrets” we discuss in “Headhunter” Hiring Secrets.)

ONE WAY TO “GET IN THE GAME?”

YES, go to the boards and yes, find an open position. But instead of applying online, **find an “internal sponsor” who will represent you on the open position.**

FACT: in 2009, **26.7%** of hires were from an internal referral! This gives you a minimum of a 13 times greater probability of being hired!

From page 118 in “Headhunter” Hiring Secrets:

“Larger companies frequently offer a ‘referral bonus’ to employees who recommend someone who gets hired. Such bonuses can range from \$500 to \$3,000. So, if you see an opening with a company that you are a fit for, i.e., you truly have the credentials that are required, use your networking skills (which we will coach you on two sections from now) to identify someone who works in that company, get them to review your résumé and credentials and, if they feel you would be a good fit, ask them if they would be willing to sponsor you and submit your information internally. And “what is in it for them,” of course, is the “finder’s fee.””

Additionally, we provide you with step-by-step guidelines on:

- How to find an internal sponsor and
- Exactly what to say to them

Here is one example of an effective script for finding a possible “internal sponsor”:

(JIM)

“Valerie, this is Jim Smith calling. I know your time is valuable and this will only take three minutes. Do you have three minutes, or should we schedule a time to speak?”

(VALERIE)

“I have three minutes but that’s it. What is this about?”

(JIM)

“I noticed that your company has an opening for a mechanical engineer at its Chicago facility. Now, I know that, since the position is posted, I either need to go to HR or apply online. However, I have one important question for you. Many large companies like yours have employee referral programs, where if someone is referred and hired the referring employee gets paid a couple of thousand dollars.

“Valerie, if I were to send you my résumé, and indeed you felt that I was “MNO Company quality material,” would you be willing to introduce me into the company? The value of your doing so ensures that I get reviewed by a real person and not a computer, and the value to you is that you might get the referral fee. Would you be open to me sending my information to you for review?”

THE REALITY

Half the time the person you speak to will be willing to review your resume and half the time they won’t. If they won’t review your resume, find and connect with another person using the research techniques we show you in *“Headhunter” Hiring Secrets*. Apply online through the job board/Internet only as a last resort; only after all other attempts to get into the company have failed. (Finding a sponsor is just one of several ways to try to “get in the game.”)

And if you do find a sponsor, by no means apply online as a “backup.” That will possibly cause their referral bonus to be “null and void.” Why? If you are “inhaled” into the HR computer, HR will tell the sponsoring employee that “they already have you” and thus don’t owe them a referral bonus. So do NOT apply online and then look for a sponsor. Nor find a sponsor and then as a “back up” apply online.

As a final note, there may come a time when the company asks you to fill in their “online application”, i.e. apply online, so that they have a formal record of your information. Then, at that indicated point in time, follow their instructions.

Skip Freeman, author of *"Headhunter" Hiring Secrets: The Rules of the Hiring Game Have Changed . . . Forever!*, has successfully completed more than 300 executive search assignments in just seven years. Specializing in the placement of sales, engineering, manufacturing and R&D professionals in industry, he has developed powerful techniques that help companies hire the best and help the best get hired.

A distinguished graduate of the United States Military Academy, West Point, he is a lifelong student of leadership, people and the principles of success. While serving in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Chemical Corps, he also earned a Master of Science degree in Organic Chemistry from The Georgia Institute of Technology and a Master of Business Administration degree in Marketing from Long Island University.