

Searching a job through job boards

India produces over 400,000 engineers alone every year. Add to that the number of graduates from other streams and the figures are quite daunting.. Once you graduate, securing a job becomes your first priority. Your first job, whether it lasts for six months or for the next few years, sets the path for your future career. It has the power of realising your dreams of money, career and status.. But, with only about 25 per cent or so of this pool of graduates being recruited through campus recruitments every year, the rest of the lot are left to fend for themselves

Given this situation, some of the questions that haunt such fresh graduates are - “Where do I find my dream job?”, “How do I get to know about vacancies in companies?” and “Who can help me in my job hunt?”

Campus recruitments apart, there are six other ways to find a job for yourself:

- Referrals (from current employees in target companies)
- Consultants (recruitment consultants)
- Job fairs (mass recruitment fairs held regularly)
- Job boards (naukri, monster, jobsahead etc.)
- Recruitment ads (in news papers, magazines, job boards etc.)
- Direct contact (by contacting the HR department of companies)

Of all the above approaches, job boards are the ones most used by graduates, and it is also the one which lacks the human element, either directly or indirectly. It is the resume alone, that determines the success of this approach. Hence, 'what' is written in a resume, 'how' it is written and what message it conveys to the employer needs great application of thought.

There are hundreds of thousands of resumes in all the popular job boards put together and any given job board throws up 25000 resumes at a time for various combinations of educational qualifications and skill sets. The primary problem here is that most students tend to copy other resumes rather than maintaining an originality in their own resume. Its almost like shooting yourself in the foot.

The challenge is to differentiate yourself from the pack. Given the large pool of resumes in job boards, hoping for the employer to find you is like expecting to find a needle in a haystack. The feasible approach and also the one that best enhances your chances is by responding to a job ad rather than simply posting your resume. When you post a resume, you compete with the existing pool of resumes. By responding to an ad, the numbers are more favourable.

Success rates at job searches through resume posts in job boards or responses to job ads in job boards can be enhanced if you:

1. Customise your resume to yourself and don't copy. Remember...what's food for one is sometimes poison for another. There is no standard or accepted format to write a resume and hence it makes no sense to copy.
2. Customise your resume to the job. Change it for every job that you apply.

Ex: If a candidate is applying for an IT company, then he or she should highlight all achievements like projects carried out, courses attended or papers presented in the IT field and not spend too much effort in speaking about a different field which has no relevance to the job in contention.

3. Bring out your personality in the resume. A resume should 'talk' to the employer.

As mentioned earlier, given the missing human element in resumes, the gap should be filled by the message conveyed in the resume. Candidates should not aim to provide a CV (curriculum vitae) which in simple words, is a list meant to document every job and degree received. A resume on the other hand is a career and educational summary meant to highlight your skills and experience.

An employer must get the feeling that it is indeed the candidate who is speaking to them through the resume, rather than the feeling of reading one or two sheets of a CV.

4. Demonstrate your seriousness by mentioning points about the company that you are applying to.

Most employers seek answers to these common questions:

- Why does the candidate want to work for their company?
- What does the candidate know about their company?
- In what way can the candidate contribute to their company?
- Why should they hire the candidate?

Although these questions are usually asked in the personal interview, if candidates can demonstrate their enthusiasm to work for a particular employer by doing sufficient employer research, it would hold them in good stead. Employer research can be done in numerous ways like visiting the company website, doing internet searches and also by contacting the current and past employees

An ITES sales recruiter has just returned from a campus recruitment programme, having interviewed 40 potential candidates. Very few candidates were called for the second round of interview. Why? The rest had failed to convincingly answer the first question, Well, why do you want to work for us?

Recruiters expect you to gather basic background knowledge about the company that you are approaching for a job. If you don't, it gives the impression that you are really not serious about the job. It conveys the message that you are a casual job seeker rather than

someone who wants to make a successful career. The same holds good for a casually written resume.

The preamble to the entire process is that candidates should first decide the industry that they would want to enter, the job profile that they think would match their interests and the company that they wish to join.

The formula for success remains the same - keep your resume updated and relevant, and do your groundwork effectively.

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