

Job Search 2.0

By Robert Half International

Looking for a way to jumpstart your job search? Consider going digital. Technology continues to evolve, allowing professionals to improve their employment prospects and capture the attention of hiring managers in intriguing ways. While these methods have not been time-tested, they do offer alternative — and potentially fruitful — avenues to finding a new position. Here are a few of the most promising:

Socializing in cyberspace. As the saying goes, “It’s not what you know but who you know.” This maxim continues to hold true, as networking is one of the best ways to generate job leads. Thanks to the Internet, ways to meet new people have expanded. Social networking sites such as LinkedIn and Facebook provide virtual opportunities to connect with other professionals — in your area or halfway across the world. Participating in chat rooms and discussion forums, such as those hosted by professional associations in your field or industry, also is an excellent way to find out about open positions.

While the Internet can seem like a casual environment, the rules of etiquette still apply. In fact, you should be particularly vigilant while conversing in cyberspace. It’s easy to express opinions or use language you normally wouldn’t when you’re not face to face with your audience. Worse, if you make a faux pas online, it may be posted for everyone to see and archived on the site for years to come.

Industry blogs. More and more people are producing business-related blogs, and these can draw interest from employers who seek job candidates with industry expertise. Some job seekers have found that their blogs have helped distinguish them in the employment search by demonstrating their knowledge of hot topics, writing skills and personalities. For instance, a blog

documenting innovative software code might catch the eye of the hiring manager at a high-tech firm. Blogs can be particularly helpful for those in fields such as media or communications that require practitioners to remain on the cutting edge of technology trends.

Be cautious if you decide to include a link to your blog in your resume or cover letter. Your site should be professional in nature. Posting potentially embarrassing photos or descriptions of weekend exploits, for example, could reflect negatively upon you and remove you from consideration.

Video vignettes. Another recent development is the video resume. Some job seekers — especially those in creative fields — are attempting to differentiate themselves by presenting their employment qualifications in video form. Improvements in technology have made it simpler and less expensive to produce a video that looks professional and can be uploaded to the Internet, where prospective hiring managers can view it.

Tread carefully, though. Many hiring managers will not consider viewing videos of potential hires because of concerns over possible discrimination claims. Remember, it is not lawful to make employment decisions based on such factors as appearance, age, race or religion.

No matter which tactics you decide to use in your employment search, don't forget the tried-and-true paths to success: A well-written resume, relevant work experience and a sought-after skill set will still draw the most interest from employers.

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