Online Job Search

Intro

Searching for jobs is difficult! It can be a long and stressful process. Both you and potential employers are looking for the right fit, which is not easy. A lot of the job search process is done online today. Between finding jobs, writing your cover letter and resume, completing other application materials, and turning everything in, there is a lot to keep track of. This handout hopefully will help you through that process.

You'll Need…

- Email address (usually free)
- Phone
- Computer (or use one at the library)

- Cover letter
- References (usually 3)
- Other materials (essays)
- Interview outfit(s)

Websites and Apps

There are tons of websites for finding jobs to apply to. From SimplyHired to Indeed, *some are better than others, and some may have mobile apps. *Note: these sites may be updated at any time – hopefully they improve each time.*

*Indeed.com
Search 'what' kind of jobs 'where'. This is one of the better job search sites. You can use filters to do very specific searches and then have new results for those searches emailed to you.

*LinkedIn.com
Create your professional profile here. Network with similar professionals. Get recommendations, post your experience, and search for clients or gigs.

Monster.com
Search job titles, keywords, companies in terms of location. Monster can email results directly to you. Check out their advanced search.

*Craigslist chicago.craigslist.org/
Craigslist is for more than just selling or giving away stuff locally. Employers post a wide array of jobs. Craigslist is a not-for-profit, so you don't have to worry about creating an account.

Careerbuilder.com
Like Monster, you can search keywords and locations. But CareerBuilder has its own categorization of jobs which may be helpful. Looking for recent posts? Filter by 'Date'.

Illinoisworknet
The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity has an excellent set of free career, job, and training resources for you to browse or download.

*Specialized industry sites (ex: RAILS)
Some employers don't want to post their openings on well-known websites. Often, they post to industry specific websites to find job applicants in their field rather than general applicants. If you know about the industry specific site, that makes you a better candidate.

*Specific employer websites
Many employers post their jobs to their own websites as well. Large companies often require you to set up an account with them. If there's a specific company you're interested in, definitely check out their website regularly so you don't miss out on any job posts.

Resumes

There is lots of advice out there about resumes. Do you put a mission or goal statement at the top? Do you put your education, experience, or something else first? How should it be formatted generally? Should it be more than one page or how many pages should it be? What font? How big should the text be? How should it be formatted?

Most resumes include *education*, *work history*, and *contact information*. But no two resumes look the same for good reason. If you have great experience but not a college degree, you might want to put your work history at the top of your resume or even omit education. If you've just graduated college with little experience, information about your education is great to include prominently. Resumes for members of different industries often look differently.

Search for example resumes to see what looks good, what looks bad. Do searches such as 'nurse resume' 'actor resume', 'graphic designer resume', etc. A few image search engines are:

- google.com/imghp
- bing.com/images

Cover Letters

Cover letters are where you get to directly relate your work, volunteering, or life experience to the job you're applying for. Cover letters typically include:

- ☐ Address of where you're applying and name of hiring manager if known
- ☐ Salutation "Dear [their name]," OR "To Whom It May Concern:"
- ☐ Job title "I'm writing to apply for the specialist position…"
- ☐ How or where you found out about job "…which I saw on your website."
- ☐ Why you're applying for job – reentering workforce, switching careers,
  looking for full time work, new degree, moving… – only if mentioning helps you
- ☐ Your current work situation, and/or experiences that make you good for the job
- ☐ Closing "Thanks for your consideration, [your name]"
- ☐ Your contact information – *maybe omit your address if relocation is an option

Like resumes, there is a ton of different advice out there about cover letters. Should it be one page or two pages? Should you say that you're looking forward to hearing back? Or should that be in an email? How should it be formatted? How customized should it be? What style should you write in? There aren't concrete answers to any of these questions unfortunately.

Plaintext materials

Automatic evaluation of job applicants by computer screening software (often called "applicant tracking systems") is leading to a resurgence of plaintext material requirements. PDFs may not be the best format after all! Some best practices for plaintext materials include:

- Start with your normal resume; most word processing programs will allow you to save as a different file type such as .txt for plaintext. Avoid copy-pasting from word processed documents since this can introduce weird formatting issues (retype or save as instead)
- Keep formatting simple
- No special characters or bullets, no tabbing
- Use san serif fonts like Verdana, Arial, Tahoma, or Calibri NOT Times New Roman
- Use returns [Enter key] for spacing
- ALL CAPS TO EMPHASIZE SOMETHING if you expect your resume to be read by a human after it's passed through a computer system
- Know and use the industry lingo, acronyms, and keywords that show you're right for the position. You should be able to find many of these keywords in job ads themselves. But don't go overboard with keywords.

EXAMPLE:
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Pat Jobseeker
123 Main Street Yourtown, ST 60047
(847) 438-XXXX
patjobseeker@email.com

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS
Retail sales professional with more than 10 years of supervisory
experience hiring, training, and leading up to 20 associates.

WORK HISTORY
Sept 2004 - Present RETAIL SUPERVISOR Town's Store, Yourtown, ST

Spearheaded team-based sales initiative in upscale men's
clothing store that produced unprecedented quarterly revenue
increases.

EDUCATION
August - June 2000 BACHELORS DEGREE State University, Town, ST
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More advice on creating materials for applicant tracking systems:

- http://biginterview.com/blog/2015/03/applicant-tracking-system.html
- http://lifehacker.com/5866630/how-can-i-make-sure-my-resume-gets-past-resume-robots-and-into-a-humans-hand
- http://www.vault.com/blog/resumes-cover-letters/why-sneaky-resume-tactics-may-no-longer-aid-job-hunters

Online Applications

Many employers require you to do applications entirely online. On 'careers', 'jobs', or 'employment' sections of company websites, there are often buttons that say "Apply online". Once you click those buttons, new pages load with the beginnings of online applications. Tips:

- Figure out requirements (if possible)
- Then complete cover letter, resume, essays, other long requirements first before filling out forms
- Have your personal information ready for those forms
- Upload PDF or plaintext documents
- Write down any new usernames, passwords, security questions, etc.
- Save before logging out
- Click 'Submit' only once
- Take a screenshot or save a confirmation email
- Be patient

Email Applications

Some jobs for medium-sized or smaller organizations will require you to email in materials. In this situation, the email is the first thing they see about you – it's your first impression.

- Complete long requirements first
- your_full_name@gmail.com is better than bullsfan2010@aol.com
- They know what time you hit "send"
- If your email service requires a profile picture, they may see it
- Don't forget to include your attachments (some email services prevent this kind of mistake)
- Example: Dear [employer], Please find attached my [materials they require] for your [job title] opening. I look forward to hearing from you. Thanks, [your name]
- Be careful entering in hiring manager email addresses – typos mean your message might fail
- Don't forget to hit send!

Software and Services

Doing job applications can be annoying. Here are some great tools to make the process simpler.

- **Gmail, Yahoo, Hotmail** – free email. mail.google.com, mail.yahoo.com, hotmail.com
- **Dropbox** – free online file storage (if you don't like emailing yourself). dropbox.com
- **Skype** – free online video conferencing (for remote interviews). skype.com
- **Google Drive** – free online word processor and spreadsheet creator. drive.google.com
- **OpenOffice** – free typing program. www.openoffice.org/
- **Microsoft Word** – paid typing program. office.microsoft.com/en-us/
- **FoxitReader*** – free PDF editor (for pesky applications that make you print, fill out, and then re-submit paper forms). There are paid versions of this, but the free one is great. foxitsoftware.com/downloads/ [Windows only] {Available on our 2nd floor computers.}
- **Adobe Reader** – free PDF viewer. Allows you to fill out some special PDF applications. get.adobe.com/reader/
- **Feedly** – free online RSS reader. Feedly and other RSS readers can automatically harvest certain job posts for you to review if a website posts a feed. feedly.com

Approach

There seem to be two main approaches to the process of applying for jobs:

- **Shotgun** – apply to lots of similar jobs at once
- **Sniper** – apply to fewer jobs with more customized application documents

Other Tips

- Interview potential employers (you don't want a bad job)
- Keep track of the jobs you apply for
- Spell check, don't typo, sleep on it
- Double check all of your materials
- Bring copies to your interviews
- Who you know still matters – Networking!
- Early is the new on time
- Save job descriptions
- Interviewing is a skill
- Get into a routine
- Say "Thank you"
- Sign up for a Career Counseling session provided by the College of Lake County at the Library (on the first Wednesday of each month except August)

Library Employment & Career Guidance Resources

The library subscribes to a number of research databases, found at http://www.eapl.org/resources .

Ferguson's Career Guidance Center
This critically acclaimed database features authoritative and comprehensive career information on over 3,300 jobs, resume and cover letter samples, interviewing advice and tips, and resources college planning, scholarships, and financial aid.

Glassdoor
Glassdoor.com is a career and workplace community where anyone can find and anonymously share salary details about specific jobs for specific employers or company and interview reviews describing life on the inside of an employer. Information comes from the people who know these companies best - either the employees who work there or the candidates who have interviewed there.

JobNow
Need help with your resume? JobNow offers live job coaching assistance for adults! This resource is available every day from 2-11PM. [Some sections of this resource require you to create a free account.]

Books
650.14 – A lot of great books on job searching, resumes, etc. are at this location in our non-fiction collection. Ask a librarian for help or search our catalog at http://ccsp.ent.sirsi.net/client/en_US/eapl .

Sample spreadsheet for keeping track of applications:

employer	address	phone	job title	turned in on	follow-up
Company 1	123 Damon St.	847-867-5309	Specialist	9/28/2015	
Company 2	1 Infinite Loop Dr.	???	Customer Service Rep	10/1/2015	Skype interview 10/14
Company 3	276 Mohawk Trail	847-222-2222	Clerk	10/2/2015	in-person interview 10/15
Company 4	n/a	847-111-1112	Sales Representative	10/2/2015	phone interview 10/13
Company 5	???	847-222-2223	Sales Lead	10/4/2015	second interview tbd
Company 6	1243 Street Rd	847-123-4343	Head of Sales	10/5/2015	

Example online job post – many are longer, most are formatted differently, many use online forms, etc.

Adult Reference Librarian/Computer Specialist: [LIBRARY]

Job Title: Adult Reference Librarian/Computer Specialist **FT/PT:** Full Time

Hours: 37.5 hours per week. Night and Weekend Availability.

Salary: DOQ depends on qualifications. Excellent Benefits what benefits?.

Position Description: Are you passionate about technology? Are you excited about digital media labs and maker spaces? Are you ready to use your innovative ideas and 21st century library skills? If so, this may be the position for you! The [LIBRARY] is looking to fill a full-time Librarian/Computer Specialist position in our Adult Reference Department. The [LIBRARY] is a progressive and customer service focused library located in the community of [TOWN]. The Adult Reference Department provides a wide range of services including non-fiction reference, technology assistance, and collection development. We are dedicated to delivering innovative services that will address our community's emerging needs.

Responsibilities:
- Regularly performs reference service and non-fiction readers advisory at adult desk of library.
- Assists and instructs patrons with library technology.
- Assists patrons and staff with various hardware and software in the Media Labs. Provides 1-hour Media Lab help appointments and teaches classes.
- Conducts computer classes for public and staff; creates and prepares handouts and training materials, assists in management and planning of the Library's adult computer class program.
- Responsible for collection development and management in designated areas; selects, orders, weeds

Knowledge, Skills, Abilities:

Knowledge of technology applications relative to public library reference services. Ability to conduct training and do presentations. Advanced knowledge of Windows, MS Office programs, and the Internet. Working knowledge of current library practices and procedures. Ability to:
- Work and communicate effectively with staff and the public.
- Set priorities, make independent decisions, and exercise discretion with patrons and staff.
- Work effectively both independently and as a team member.
- Follow through on tasks to completion.
- Learn additional computer application programs.
- Use computer keyboard and telephone.

Application Deadline: Open until job is filled

Application Contact: Human Resources Department

Apply To: [Library] {address} (phone) –email– hr@library.org

Example resume – yours may be shorter, longer, formatted differently, etc.

John X. Doe A+ (title) | 275 Mohawk Trail, Lake Zurich, IL 60047| (847) 438-3433

jxdoe@email.com | jxdoe.com | jxdoe.tumblr.com| @jxdoe

EDUCATION
University of State
Formal Name of Department-Month 2011, [Degree abbreviation/name] in [Degree topic]

EXPERIENCE
Employer Name, YOUR TITLE, *Time you-worked there*
What you did at this employer, most important thing, 2nd most important thing, 3rd most important thing, 4th most important thing, 5th most important thing, etc. most important thing

Random Free Library, REFERENCE LIBRARIAN / COMPUTER WIZARD, *June 2014-present*
Reference and readers' advisory, computer classes, ereader and tablet instruction, makerspace

Cline Public Library, DIGITAL AWESOMENESS LIBRARIAN, *April 2014-June 2014*
Staff tech demos and training, database reporting, tech instruction handouts, administration

skooB Public Library, ADULT SERVICES LIBRARIAN, *May 2011-March 2012*
Website updates and maintenance, programming, collection development, displays

Tyop District Library, ADULT SERVICES INTERN, *January-September 2013*
Streamlined newsletter production process, group technology classes, designed handouts, weeding

Town Library, LIBRARY INTERN, *May-August 2013*
Led OCR digitization of local history materials, trained volunteers, facilitated summer reading activities

COMMUNITY SERVICE
Technology Club, Volunteer Director, 2011-2012 | Member, 2008-12
Recruited, organized, trained volunteers for elderly home tech instruction program; marketed events

SKILLS
- Customer service
- Technology instruction
- Creating displays
- Learning quickly
- Social media like Facebook, Twitter
- CompTIA A+ Certified in computers (see 'title' at top by name)
- Microsoft Office/Google Drive
- Apple iOS, Google Android, Windows XP-8, many tablets and ereaders

Example cover letter – yours may be shorter, longer, formatted differently, etc.

Random Free Library
101 Address Street
City, ST #zip#

Dear [Hiring Manager], **OR** To Whom It May Concern:
I am writing to apply for your full time Adult Reference Librarian/Computer Specialist job opening which I saw on the RAILS job board. As an enthusiastic digital native, I believe I am the candidate you are looking for. 12-pt Times New Roman, single space, 2 returns per paragraph.

Currently I work part time for the Random Free Library and the Skoob Public Library. My experiences at both have been great, but I would prefer to have one full time job. I enjoy collection development, patron and staff technology training, and providing responsive customer service at the reference desks of both libraries. My best work is done when I use technology to open up access to resources. I do that in one-on-one tech instruction sessions, group classes, and also in projects like designing new methods of keeping reference statistics.

At the District Library last summer, I focused on teaching a variety of group technology classes. From basic mousing and keyboarding to Microsoft Office, Facebook, Linkedin, and Windows 8, I helped take the fear of patrons away to make technology work for them. I also enjoyed working with another librarian to design a custom workstation to simplify access to local history and genealogy resources. At the same time, I worked with the communication services department to streamline the production of their newsletter to more easily reach out to patrons. The previous summer, I interned at the Town Library. While helping patrons of all ages at the reference desk, I also led a digitization project. With the help of volunteers I trained, I selected materials of interest to the community and made them available online in a searchable format.

During graduate school, I led a group of volunteers who did technology troubleshooting and instruction at an elderly home. What was more important than the wild variety of technology I learned to patiently troubleshoot and instruct on was the difference we made. The residents really appreciated our service and we became a part of their community. Volunteering there, I realized technology is not something separate. Technology is an inseparable part of any environment these days and can do fantastic things when implemented thoughtfully. Despite being busy in school studying for classes on topics like library administration, reference, and web mashups, I strived to make each time I volunteered a positive experience for the elderly home residents.

As someone who has grown up as consumer technology has matured. I know its power. I look forward to working in digital media labs, learning makerspace technologies, and embracing the innovative technologies of the future. When people like me with many technology skills implements solutions, they can do great things. To do that, I intend to always be adding skills. As libraries, information, and society change I plan to be right there studying trends and bringing them to library publics. If given the opportunity, I would love to join you and the Random team!

Thanks for your consideration,
John X. Doe
jxdoe@email.com, 275 Mohawk Trail, Lake Zurich, IL 60047, (847) 438-3433