

Using the Internet in Your Job Search

By Leslie White

If you've been given notice by your employer because of downsizing or so called "performance issue," you may need some help in your quest for a new job. Most of you may be thinking of reaching out to the Internet. And you may have the right idea. According to *Job Searching Online for Dummies* by Pam Dixon, 17,000 new jobs are posted online each week and employers and recruiters use the Web to make 48% of all hires.

So, how do you use the Internet in your job search?

First, be sure to use the Internet as a supplement to your networking. While the Web may account for 48% of all hires, the majority of hires 52% are made outside of the Web. A common mistake for job seekers is to rush to the computer, surf the Internet, and forego networking altogether. While using the Internet may seem like a simple and relatively effortless solution – it is no substitute for networking. So while you are surfing the Web, make sure to also get in touch with your contacts and expand your existing networks (i.e. meet with people in your field, reach out to recruiters etc.).

Second, do not spend all of your time on the Internet. It's easy to spend eight hours on the computer, aimlessly searching for jobs, and coming up empty handed. If you are going to be using this powerful tool, the key is to put together a game plan that includes a list of sites you will be searching, and determining in advance how much time you will be dedicating each day to this task. It is important to work within a structure and to keep focused.

Finally, be ready for silent rejection. Don't assume that you will receive a response, positive or negative, to every resume you send. In fact, you should assume the opposite. Why? Because the companies and people to whom you are sending your resume have to contend with a deluge of resumes and may not have either the time or the manpower to respond to every applicant. For example, at ESQ Recruiting, we receive an average of 300+ resumes per open position, when you consider that we have over a dozen positions available at any one time, we are looking at thousands of resumes that we have to respond to. Although we respond to every single applicant, many companies do not, and you may find yourself sending hundreds of resumes without ever receiving a single response.

The good news is that the Internet can be a very valuable and powerful tool in your job search. The key is to identify what will work for you. So let's get started.

JOB LISTINGS

Many job site services are very useful. Some are not, and a few should be avoided altogether. So, where do you start? Most people start with the large super job sites, like www.monster.com and www.careerbuilder.com. While these large sites may not yield as many opportunities as other sites specialized in your field or practice, you cannot and should not ignore the big sites, particularly if you want to work for a large employer.

However, there are many more resources for your job search now than just the big sites. The best sites for you are those specialized in legal positions; they include:

- **ABA**, <http://www.abanet.org/careercounsel/jobs.html>, job boards, information on networking opportunities, internships, other resources offered by the American Bar Association.
- **AttorneyJobs**, <http://www.attorneyjobs.com>, is the Web site of the print monthly. The print version claims more than 500 listings each issue. The Web site offers only a dozen samples from the current issue.
- **ACC**, <http://www.jobs.acca.com>, the Association of Corporate Counsel provides jobs listings by employers and recruiters for in-house attorney positions only.
- **Bench & Bar of Minnesota**, <http://www.mnbar.org/bbclass.htm>, the Minnesota State Bar Association's monthly magazine, publishes its classifieds on the Web. A recent visit found nearly 5 ads for positions in Minnesota and Wisconsin.
- **CallLaw**, <http://www.callaw.com/classified/lawad.shtml>, has legal classifieds taken from The Recorder, a daily legal newspaper in San Francisco. Ads are organized by location in the San Francisco area and are updated daily. Some include links to the advertiser's Website.
- **Hieros Gamos Employment Center**, <http://www.hg.org/employment.html>, permits employers to advertise legal positions free and include links to their home pages. Job seekers can search listings by type of position, location and practice area. Job seekers also can list their employment interests in HG's database, after which they will be notified by e-mail whenever a position in their area of interest is posted.
- **InHouse Blog**, <http://jobs.inhouseblog.com>, InHouse Blog provides news and jobs for in-house counsels, some overlap with the ACC website, but some are unique to the Blog.
- **Law Bulletin Publishing Company**, <http://www.lawbulletin.com>, publisher of the Chicago Daily Law Bulletin and Chicago Lawyer, has classified ads for lawyer and law-related employment. Listings are extensive and current. If you are looking for a job in the Chicago area, start here.

- **LawJobs.com**, <http://lawjobs.careers.adicio.com/careers/jobsearch/results>, allows job seekers to post resumes, review job databases and search for employers and recruiters. It also contains news features, links to surveys, and salary information.
- **Law Match**, <http://www.lawmatch.com>, lawmatch offers free and fee-based services that match your employment profile to on-line classified ads for attorneys, law students, paralegals and other legal professionals, including full-time, part-time or contract opportunities.
- **LawInfo.com Career Center**, <http://careers.lawinfo.com>, is three services in one: a job listing service for employers, a resume bank for job seekers, and a resume creator for anyone who needs it.
- **Lawyers Weekly**, www.lawyersweeklyjobs.com, publishes a national and seven state newspapers, all of which contain employment classifieds. Unfortunately, only its Massachusetts job ads are available online. Ads are as they appear in print and do not provide for responding electronically. Also at the site is the New Lawyer Survival Guide, a collection of articles from Lawyers Weekly USA.
- **MyLawJob.com**, <http://www.mylawjob.com>, MyLawJob.com offers a job database of almost 3,000 legal jobs.
- **AHLA**, http://archive.healthlawyers.org/crm_queries/career/main.cfm, lists positions in health law. Employers pay \$350 to list here. Listings appear in summary form, with location, title and posting date. Links lead to complete job descriptions and contact information. A recent visit showed 9 listings.
- **Public Service JobNet**, https://cgi2.www.law.umich.edu/_JobNet/main.asp, from the University of Michigan Law School, lists public service jobs from throughout the nation. Listings can be viewed by job title or date, or searched by location, practice area, job type or eligibility criteria.
- **San Diego Daily Transcript**, <http://www.sddt.com/classifieds>, a legal and commercial newspaper, posts its employment classifieds on the Web. Ads cannot be searched, but are viewed by scrolling through the pages.
- **Simply Hired**, <http://www.simplyhired.com/job-search>, a job search engine with 6 million legal and non-legal job listings and thousands of jobs sites.
- **SimplyLawJobs.com**, <http://www.simplylawjobs.com>, maintains an employment database of over 10,000 legal jobs in the United Kingdom and other countries.
- **U.S. Courts**, <http://www.uscourts.gov/employment.html>, for individuals seeking a job within the judiciary, U.S. Courts maintains a list of employment opportunities in the federal judiciary.

- **U.S. Dept. of Justice**, <http://www.usdoj.gov/careers/oapm/index.html>, lists its available attorney positions. A summary lists titles, location and closing dates, with hypertext links to complete job descriptions and application information.
- **WisBar**, <http://www.wisbar.org>, the Web site of the Wisconsin Bar Association, posts job listings from two sources: Marquette Law School's Career Planning Office and its own monthly magazine, Wisconsin Lawyer. Some ads include links to the employer's e-mail or Web site.

JOB LISTING (Paid By Applicants)

Job postings are a primary source of revenue for most job sites. Therefore, it is not unusual for most job boards and job websites to charge a premium to employers and recruiters who post jobs. In fact, that typically indicates that the job site in question is getting a lot of traffic, and that the jobs posted are relevant, as employers and/or recruiters would not pay to advertise jobs that they were not actually recruiting for.

Job sites that require applicants to pay to search their job listings on the other hand should be viewed more cautiously. Why? Because unlike job sites that require employers and/or recruiters to pay to list their jobs, here any and all jobs can be posted without any insurance that the job is either valid, exists, active, or posted by the actual employer or recruiter. In other words, there is no quality control regarding the jobs being posted since it is free and anyone can post anything at anytime. So buyers beware!

Some subscriber-paid job sites are reliable, while others are simply running scams.

EmplawyerNet, <http://www.emplawyernet.com>, claims to be the largest online legal jobs database, boasting more than 3,000 listings. Employers can post ads free, but job seekers must pay a monthly subscription of \$14.95 a month or \$125 per year. Subscribers can search ads by location, practice setting or area of expertise. They can also list their own credentials and resumes for employers to retrieve. EmplawyerNet has been around since 1996, and according to our research it appears to be a reputable business with a good reputation.

LawCrossing, <http://www.lawcrossing.com>, on the other hand, is one company you should avoid. LawCrossing claims to be the #1 Legal Job Board in America with over 100,000 jobs. It has a sleek website, a huge job bank, and for all intents and purposes appears to be a reputable business. It is deceiving.

Here's the catch. According to the Better Business Bureau, LawCrossing.com based in Pasadena, CA, posts job listings for the legal profession on its website. At least some of those who sign up and pay monthly to access the listings find no jobs, no accurate listings, no way out of their subscription, and certainly no way to make the company live up to its double-your-money-back guarantee. Even lawyers can't get a refund, everyone's patience is on trial, and complainants undoubtedly conclude that they've been double-crossed by LawCrossing.

LawCrossing.com, according to at least one of the BBB's 29 complaints on file, sends out emails soliciting recipients to subscribe to their website. If you sign up, their website promises you "unlimited access to the world's largest, most advanced, most exclusive legal job resource!" Their database is supposed to list entry-level jobs as well as jobs for attorneys, paralegals, summer associates (paid and volunteer), general counsel, and clerks. They claim it is updated hourly with "thousands of new job openings each week." The cost? "\$29.95/month. Cancel anytime."

The reasons customers want refunds from LawCrossing vary, but the main problem with LawCrossing come from their job postings. The company scours the Internet though spiders picks up jobs anywhere and everywhere, without checking whether the position is real, active, and most importantly without checking to make sure that it is listed with the proper contact. LawCrossing also recycles its postings to make it appear as if lots of jobs are being added daily. How good is a job listing if you are not sending your resume to the person in charge of recruiting and/or hiring for the position or if the job is no longer active?

One complainant, seeking a position as an attorney, says she applied to countless listings. She alleges that in more than a third of her applications, the "supposed employer" contacted her to say that the described job did not exist, they didn't know how she'd gotten their contact information, or that their ad had not been approved to appear on a public website. She says she paid not only the subscription fee, but also postage, handling, and resume costs as well for "20 or 30 jobs that didn't even exist." This is only the tip of the iceberg, unauthorized charges, misrepresentations, refusing to provide refunds, are some of the many illicit business practices of this company. It is not surprising that the BBB not only gave LawCrossing an "F" rating, but also dedicated a special article to list its numerous complaints and unethical business practices.

RESUME DISTRIBUTION SERVICES

You may be at a stage of your job search where you want to conduct an aggressive search and contact a large number of potential employers. For a fee paid by you, distribution services will send your resume and cover letter to thousands of recruiters, headhunters, and potential employers. Sounds great doesn't it? You know what they say about things that sound too good to be true. Well, this is no exception.

There are many reasons not to use resume distribution services. First, you really have no idea who will receive your resume or what they will do with it, and you have no way of recovering it when your search is over! It takes time and effort, but you should be customizing your resume to fit the opportunity and/or the employer. The most effective way to apply for a job is with a customized resume and cover letter sent directly to an authenticated hiring contact, rather than a service that spams hundreds of identical cookie cutter resumes and cover letters to random persons within an organization.

One of the biggest legal resume distribution companies of its kind is Legal Authority, <http://www.legalauthority.com>. It promises access to more than 750,000 employers—the largest database of legal employers anywhere. Its website draws you in by claiming that it can provide you with direct access “to any legal employer anywhere, including law firms, corporations, judges, public interest organizations, and many more.” It goes on to promise “10 or more job offers.” This is exactly the type of company you should steer clear of.

Although in the last couple months, Legal Authority has raised its rating at the Better Business Bureau from an "F" to a "C" the company's business model remains basically the same. Legal Authority prepares resumes and cover letters, provides a list of potential employers, and either mails or sends you a completed package to be mailed to these prospective employers.

Legal Authority claims to be able to provide you with a large list of potential employers and contacts to receive your resume and cover letter. Of course, they do not specify whether the potential employer they are recommending to you is actually hiring - which in most cases it isn't. While Legal Authority can provide you with an impressive list of potential employers, it does not guarantee the accuracy of its information. In other words, the information you are paying for may be completely useless. The fact that your resume is being sent to AT&T is meaningless if it is simply mailed to Jane Doe at the corporate office address, and Jane Doe is not the hiring contact at AT&T, or does not work at AT&T. You just purchased a one-way ticket to the trash bin, or at best to a binder of received resumes that will never see the light of day again.

When you are paying a company like Legal Authority to provide you with 150 contacts, the assumption is that all 150 contacts will be accurate, and that your resume will be delivered to the correct hiring authority. In the case of Legal Authority you are simply hoping that some of these contacts will be correct. At best, you will assume that they are, since once your letter is sent it is unlikely that you will receive a response indicating that your resume was misdirected. This is also one of the reasons these packages are sent via mail rather than email. When an email address is incorrect you will at least receive an automatic error message. Moreover, if the email is addressed to the wrong person, you have a better chance to receive an email from that person informing you of the same. In other words, email provides you with a better opportunity to gauge the accuracy or inaccuracy of the contacts.

Legal Authority uses the same unauthenticated data that is used by Law Crossing – they are run by the same individual and share the same database information. A team located in India searches various websites through spiders to compile the information that Legal Authority uses. Legal Authority cannot ensure that the letters sent will be addressed to the correct hiring contact within that office, despite their claims. Why? Because these “hiring contacts” are never checked for accuracy. In fact, Legal Authority even instructs its customers to check all information before sending out any letters. In other words, the service Legal Authority claims to be providing is unreliable at best.

RESUME POSTINGS

Most job sites offer job applicant the opportunity to post their resume into the job site's resume/applicant database. Typically, this allows employers and/or recruiters to access the database and search for applicants that match their hiring requirements.

The key to determining which of these resume/applicant databases to choose from is confidentiality. Who will have access to your resume? If this is a job site that allows both potential employers and recruiters to view your resume, you should be provided with an option to conceal your identity. If this is a recruiter's database, you need to read their privacy policy carefully, and make sure that your resume is not being shared or distributed without your prior expressed approval.

Of course, the key to resume posting is to "market" yourself, and have your resume included in the applicant database for employers or recruiters to search, evaluate, and be able to contact you. If you are not including a name, contact information, or relevant employment information such as your employer, you may be passed over for other applicants. It's a trade-off between privacy and marketing yourself. At the end of the day, the decision has to be your, but if you want to make full use of what a resume posting/database has to offer, you need to carefully review the confidentiality policy of the site and provide all relevant information.

E-MAIL AGENTS

One of the challenges of conducting an Internet search is the amount of time you will need to dedicate searching each sites. Fortunately, many sites offer an e-mail service called email agents, to keep you informed about new jobs added to their jobs database without you having to conduct a manual search daily. This feature allows you to receive email alerts on a daily or weekly basis of new positions that are relevant to your specific job search.

When an appropriate job appears in their database of jobs, an e-mail will be sent to you to inform you of the addition, and/or the actual description of the new job will be emailed to you as well. This can save you considerable time and effort. Many sites offer you the ability to create several different agents so that you can try different combinations of search criteria, e.g. different key words, different locations, etc.

Once you have created an email agent for a particular site, you don't have to keep visiting the site to see if they have jobs for you. It's usually a good idea to sign up for the service if you can do it without compromising your privacy, as a means to save you a lot of time and keep you on top of new jobs.

CONCLUSION

The Internet can be a powerful tool to use in your job search. As you can see, employers and recruiters are making good use of the Internet and so should you. The key to a successful Internet job search is be informed with respect to the

services and sites to use, to continue to network, to invest your time wisely, and not take rejection or the lack of responses personally. Remember, all you need is one positive response.

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