

PAPER: NEW STRAITS TIMES (1KLASSIFIEDS)

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BEFORE the bottom fell out of the global economy, it was safe to say if you had 60 per cent to 70 per cent of the listed requirements on a job description, you had a decent chance of being hired. Back then, the job market was thin on talent, and some employers found themselves grateful to have found someone who could do the job, albeit someone with partial abilities.

The job market is different now. If you are a job candidate, you have to conduct your job search differently. Below are five simple job search tips that will put your job search in the fast lane.

DON'T APPLY FOR JOBS THAT YOU KNOW YOU CAN'T DO

If you are a Software Quality Assurance specialist, don't apply for a Senior Director of Regulatory Compliance. Read the job description in full detail and only apply for positions which you have the skills. It feels good to send out a bunch of resumes, but going through the motions, isn't going to yield faster rewards in your job search.

DON'T EMBELLISH ON YOUR RESUME

Lying on a resume is more obvious today than it ever was. Don't. Many jobseekers think that it is perfectly OK to 'fib a little' on a resume. Why do you list it if you know you don't have that job skill? Is it to make your resume stellar, adding to the glowing list of things you have accomplished in your career? Psych 101 says the things you have listed nearest the top of a resume and mentioned multiple times are things you are most comfortable doing. Many jobseekers today are straining to add words and tasks so their resume looks better than their competition. But this may come back to haunt you in your job search - so don't do it! Highlight what you are best at, but also come clean when asked about something you have not done. Your candor will get you further.

TAKE A PAY CUT IF YOU HAVE TO

Don't price yourself out of the market just because you think you deserve it more than the next job candidate. Trying to recover from a previous layoff by overpricing yourself is a bad idea. Assume there are 15 other people applying for the same job. You must be more aggressive in this market. Pride is the 800 pound gorilla - let go of it and land the job even it means taking a small pay cut. The job candidate who is next in line needs the job more than you. A pay cut will not last forever; and you will recover from the pay cut and be back to where you were soon enough.

Practical Job SEARCH TIPS

APPLY ONCE AND FOLLOW UP WITH AN E-MAIL

Sending 28 resumes to the same company won't get you a quicker response than sending one resume. Additional submissions are deleted. The contact management tools of today are smarter than you think, and if you submit more than once, your resume is automatically deleted. Some job search websites won't allow you to submit your resume more than once, so make your first shot your best one. After submitting your resume, send a simple e-mail to confirm receipt. Most of the time, you will get a reply. If you don't send another e-mail. Recruiters today are averaging 150 to 300 resume submissions per day from job seekers. It is a lot to dig through and takes time, so be patient.

USE A JOB RECRUITER

Find a reputable job recruitment firm and partner with them. Use their contacts and search with job recruiters instead of sitting at home waiting for a call. If you come across a job listing that fits your skills, call your job recruiter and ask what he or she knows about the company. There's a better-than-average chance the recruiter knows someone on the inside who may be able to get you in the door faster.

Word to the wise on a job search: If you don't trust your job recruiter, find another one. This is your career, this is how you put food on the table and this is how you pay your mortgage — don't waste your time with a job recruiter who is only in it for personal gain.