

Getting More Job Interviews.



Are you applying to job after job, but never getting called for an interview? Here are some questions to ask yourself that might help you work out what is keeping you from getting that interview, and ways to improve your chances next time.

Am I targeting the wrong jobs?

If you don't have the skill set or experience a job posting is asking for, there is little to no chance you are getting that job, because you're going against people who do have them. Spamming, or sending your resume to every job post, even when you clearly do not meet the job requirements, is never a good idea. Look for jobs that are looking for your education, experience and skills, and you will have greater success.

Do I have the right skill set?

If employers aren't responding to your resume, it could be because you aren't meeting all the job requirements. Review the job postings to see if there are any requirements you might be missing. If a post mentions requirements as "nice to have" or a skill as a "bonus" requirement, these are skills and experience that you will need to stand out. You can also reach out to people who work in the industry or your trade to see if they recommend any skills or training that would make you a more competitive candidate.

Could my resume or cover letter be improved?

The most common reason for job seekers to be ignored is problems with their resume or cover letter. If it is too vague, has spelling and grammar errors, or is not customized to the position being applied for, it could end up in the no pile rather quickly. Employers get numerous applications for job postings and look for ways to reduce this to make it faster and easier to decide whom to bring in for an interview. One way is using software. This is why it's important to customize your resume to the job posting, and to use the wording or keywords they used to describe the skills and experience they are looking for in your cover letter and resume. The software will be looking for these "keywords" to determine which candidates are best for the opportunity. Another way to improve your chances is to find an employment counsellor or a more experienced member from your network to review your resume and provide you with honest feedback.

Am I applying correctly?

Employers don't want to hire candidates who are annoying or who can't follow directions. Make sure that your behaviour during the application process doesn't put you into one of those categories. If the job description includes application instructions, follow them exactly. Follow up only once, about a week after you submit your application. Note job postings often state not to follow up or call, and that only candidates selected for an interview will be contacted. In this case, do not call them. If follow-up is permitted, but you notice that the employer is not returning your call, phoning repeatedly won't do any good.

Am I applying too late?

The longer the job is on the market, the more resumes and cover letters, and the harder it will be for hiring staff to review them all fully. The earlier you submit your application, the more likely it is to get a thorough look. To respond to opportunities more quickly, set up job alerts on the job boards and services you use, and have your resume and cover letter ready to be tailored to the opportunity so you can submit it quickly. That said, don't miss out on applying for a job because the post has been up for a while and you feel you might be late; just set your expectations accordingly.

Is my online presence a cause for concern?

After reviewing your resume, social media will be the next place employers look to get a complete picture of the candidates they are considering. Ask yourself if your online presence is one an employer is looking to be associated with. Offensive posts, controversial jokes, inappropriate photos, or complaints about your past employers are all red flags for a new employer. Make social media support your job search by keeping personal sites and information set to private and using public sites to build your personal brand. Ask an employment counsellor or more experienced members of your network to help understand what to highlight and what to keep private before you apply for that job.

It can be difficult to get an employer to notice you. The key is to put yourself in their position and to approach your application with a strong focus on their needs as an organization, not just for the job you are applying for.

Remember, not every application will turn into an interview, but these few simple considerations and tips for improving your resume and your job search skills should get you more opportunities to show employers what you have to offer.

Consider attending one of Tropicana Employment Centre's workshops on topics such as resumes, job search and networking, and more.

To check out Tropicana's Employment Centre's workshops, go to mytropicana.ca/employmentcalendar

