

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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Subject Online employment from a candidate perspective.

As recruiters do we actually know anything about the candidate's perspective of online employment?

Dictionary definition of: Candidate (noun)
An applicant or suitable person for a job

Let's break this down.

In an online situation an applicant is somebody who has formally applied for a job, they have followed the prompts, laboured over the online filtering questions and sent their resume to us. In the current market conditions we all know we're receiving more applications for positions advertised than ever before. Quantity however does not always equal quality!

As recruitment consultants we work hard to find the perfect candidate for our jobs, after all we are there to deliver to our clients requirements. It's ABSOLUTELY our job to interpret a brief and then determine the suitability of who is right or not for our client. This is how we earn our fees! Online recruitment will never replace this function but it is supposed to assist us!

Sometimes going through our inboxes on a Monday morning is a real drag, application after application, unsuitable candidate after unsuitable candidate. My personal favourite is the over zealous clicker, you know the one that sends in multiply applications for 10 different jobs! Are we obliged to individually, formally reject these unsuitable candidates?

We don't think so!

We don't get paid for talking with (and sometimes counseling) all the applications we receive and I will be so bold as to say that any recruitment consultant who tries talking to absolutely everyone will never be able to have a truly successful career within the industry.

This isn't about being ruthless as consultants, it's about being commercially astute and recognising how best to manage your time so you can effectively deliver to your client's requirements and speak to those candidates you deem suitable to present to your client.

So, what about the over zealous clicker who isn't suitable and we keep ignoring? What are they thinking? Why are they clicking away, like they've got \$1000 to spend on 2cent spins on a poker machine?

There could be a number of reasons:

Firstly, the job advertisement may have been too generic, allowing every man and his dog to think they had a shot.

Secondly, they're not getting a response! Click away applicant, is getting increasingly frustrated with no response so they think emailing out volume applications is the way to go.

Thirdly, we are currently in a so called "candidate rich" market, meaning there are more candidates on the job market than job opportunities and therefore applying for many jobs may give the illusion that they're in for a better shot of success. (Or at least prove to the recruiter they are keen and available!)

Fourthly, it's way too easy to apply online! "Click", "short cover letter", "click" off goes the application. Gone are the days, the ads came out on a Saturday and we waited for the ad response on a Monday morning so we could phone screen, or (dare I say) we waited for the cover letter and professional resume to come in an A4 envelope in the mail. It just doesn't take much effort to apply for a job online nowadays.

Whether it's one or a combination of these factors, there are steps we can take as recruiters to help candidates with their online experiences.

Of course candidates must take some ownership of applying for jobs that they know they are not suitable for, punching above their weight in hope they may get lucky, however we need to use our online systems and recruitment skills to our advantage so that we can minimise the number of unsuitable applications and trim that Monday morning drag.

Use your basics! Online systems are becoming much more advanced, they have fantastic tools to help you manage. For example: It is critical to have some type of auto response set up on your email, advertising management system or database that goes to all candidates who have sent in an application. Such as the below:

Thank you for sending your application

If a Consultant has not responded within 2 weeks of your application date you should assume your application was unsuccessful. Please do not respond to this email as it has been automatically generated.

Short and to the point. This will at least assist the candidate to know their application has been received and gives them a time line to when they may expect to hear and what it means if the don't.

Use filters! Set the filters up so that you obtain basic criteria out of every application you receive, perhaps ask for a cover letter. Make the application process, just that a process. I'm not saying you need to set up a Spanish inquisition, but gathering more detail than one click will filter out a few immediately. It might feel like a lot of work at the start but I can guarantee you it will be a timesaver in the long run!

Educate as you go. Whilst we've said that it is not the job of a recruitment consultant to contact every single candidate that has applied, let me be very clear to say that it IS the job of the recruitment consultant to act with professionalism at all times. Your online recruitment system should be viewed as an extension of your service or, if you like, your consulting skills. If a candidate emails or calls to follow up on why they have been unsuccessful you must take the time to have that conversation with them. Refer to your ad, e.g. "as I've put in the ad, I really need telcos experience, your resume looks great and thanks for calling in but just double check the criteria before you apply, best of luck!". If we all did this, across all sectors, we'd soon educate applicants to apply only for what they are suited to. Wouldn't that make all our lives easier!

The most important part about that conversation is leaving the candidate with a positive impression so they will continue to apply for positions in the future. In fact if you're optimistic and helpful I'll guarantee they'll keep a look out specifically for your name on your ads. If however, they now believe sending their resume in for future positions advertised will have the same result as before, why will they even bother?

We have written in previous articles for Recruitment Extra how recruiters are often unfairly tarnished with the same brush as dodgy used car salesmen (not wanting to stereotype here, not all used car salesmen are dodgy, but you know what I mean!). I would suggest that many of the people tarnishing us with this brush have been unsuccessful in their online employment applications or, at the very least, have had a frustrating experience. Online systems are only going to get better and more advanced. I can't emphasis enough how they should be seen as extension of your service. Embrace them now, spend the time to learn about using a quality online recruitment system correctly and you're applicants are going to have a far better experience.