Electronic job searching: suggestions for educators

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Electronic job searching: suggestions for educators

Abstract
The Internet offers an abundance of resources and information to the job seeker. Because of this great wealth of data, it is important educators are able to assist students in developing a path to take when utilizing the Internet as a job searching tool. When job searching using the Internet, students can go online to determine their interests, research various careers, research various companies, and research general and specific job listings using online job boards and online newspaper classifieds. The Internet also offers information on the various resume formats needed by today’s job seeker. These resume formats include those that are scannable, searchable and uploadable along with resumes that are Web based and those that are input via the use of forms located at various Internet job boards. Some types of projects educators could use include developing keyword lists, web site address lists, networking skills, digital portfolios and job search notebooks. Overall, educators today need to develop projects that help students become familiar with both traditional as well as electronic methods of job seeking.
Electronic Job Searching: Suggestions For Educators

A Graduate Research Paper
Submitted to the
Division of Educational Technology
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
in Fulfillment
of the Requirements for Master of Arts

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

by
Jan Andreesen
December 1998
This Review by Jan Andreesen

Titled: Electronic Job Searching—Suggestions for Educators

has been approved as meeting the research requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts in Educational Technology.

Sharon E. Smaldino
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Abstract

The Internet offers an abundance of resources and information to the job seeker. Because of this great wealth of data, it is important educators are able to assist students in developing a path to take when utilizing the Internet as a job searching tool. When job searching using the Internet, students can go online to determine their interests, research various careers, research various companies, and research general and specific job listings using online job boards and online newspaper classifieds. The Internet also offers information on the various resume formats needed by today's job seeker. These resume formats include those that are scannable, searchable and uploadable along with resumes that are Web based and those that are input via the use of forms located at various Internet job boards.

Some types of projects educators could use include developing keyword lists, web site address lists, networking skills, digital portfolios and job search notebooks.

Overall, educators today need to develop projects that help students become familiar with both traditional as well as electronic methods of job seeking.
CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Preparing today’s students for tomorrow’s job marketplace will require more than the traditional job seeking techniques. With the ever increasing prominence of the Internet, students will need to be able to seek employment in both an electronic and traditional manner. According a 1998 Ernst & Young/American Management Association HR Focus Survey, “70 percent of the survey respondents use the Internet for recruiting, and half surveyed have employed ‘virtual’ candidates in the past year” (Dixon, 1998, p. 11). In addition, a survey by Lee Hecht Harrison Multinational Career Services found that over 40 percent of employers use their corporate web sites to post jobs (Dixon, 1998).

Communications giant AT&T has gone from an employment office approach to a 50 percent online approach. Stinson, senior public relations manager for AT&T notes “the lion’s share of our hiring from the street is done online. Recruiting on college campuses is now a rare occurrence” (How Computers are Changing the Job-Seeking Process, 1998, p. 2). In their book Workplace 2000, Boyett and Conn (cited in Smith, 1997) note that job searching will become an ongoing activity in which the Internet is well suited because they believe the average American will most likely work in ten or more jobs with at least five different companies before they retire. These examples demonstrate the growing trend toward employers seeking employees electronically. With this trend in mind, it is
important educators make an effort to guide their students through this somewhat new frontier.

**Research Questions**

A guide to electronic job searching will be the overall focus of this paper with the following questions being addressed:

1. How does a job seeker go about pounding the "virtual pavement"?
2. What factors must be considered when creating an electronic resume?
3. What can educators do to facilitate the learning process as it relates to electronic job searching?

**Terms**

1. **ASCII**—Stands for American Standard Code for Information Exchange. A very simple form of text that almost all computers can read.

2. **Chat Rooms**—An area on the Internet where messages are typed to others and responses can be received immediately. Each of these rooms are generally based on specific topics of interest to the group chatting.

3. **Electronic Agent**—A tool located at job board sites that allows job seekers to submit information about the types of jobs they are interested in. When jobs of interest are listed on the board, the job seeker is notified of their availability via e-mail.
4. Electronic Job Searching—Adjusting the traditional job search to take into account the advent of Internet job seeking resources as well as computer, scanning and database resources available to today’s employers.

5. Electronic Resume—A tool listing background information about a job seeker that is put into a format that can be scanned into a computer database, searched or read by a computer, and/or can be placed on the Internet in a readable format.

6. E-Mail—The sending of messages from one computer to another using e-mail software and a modem.

7. HTML—Stands for Hypertext Markup Language. The language used to create Internet Web sites.

8. Interactive Testing—Testing that is completed online in which immediate feedback is available to responses given.

9. Interest Survey—Questions are asked to help the person completing the survey determine specific areas of interest as it relates to possible careers.

10. Internet—a global network of computers.

11. Job Board—Sites located on the Internet which provide listings of jobs available and may offer job seeking, resume writing or career information.

12. Keyword paragraph—A condensed paragraph near the top of a resume that highlights a job seeker’s skills, background and education. Keywords are
generally nouns that include things such as job titles, schools attended or software/hardware capable of using.

13. Networking—Using contacts made with people in previous situations to obtain information or assistance.

14. Newsgroups—A discussion group on the Internet in which participants post messages to what could be called an electronic bulletin board.


16. Online Networking—Utilizing various Internet resources to make contacts with various people who can provide needed information or assistance.

17. Online—A reference to accessing the Internet.

18. RTF—Stands for Rich Text Format. A very simple form of text that almost all computers can read.

19. Scannable Resume—A resume on paper that is formatted appropriately so it can be properly read by a scanner and then saved to a computer database.


21. Searchable Resume—A resume that has a listing of keywords that will give it a better chance of being selected by computer programs utilized by potential employers to locate appropriate job candidates.

23. Uploadable Resume—A resume created using a computer and saved in a format such as ASCII or RTF. These types of formats allow the data file of the resume to be read by nearly any computer.

24. Virtual Pavement—Utilizing the Internet to among other things seek career information, job searching advice, and employment opportunities.

25. Web—Shortened for World Wide Web (WWW). The WWW is a location on the Internet that provides access to information in a graphical format with text links used to move from one site to another.
CHAPTER TWO

Methodology

Information for this paper was gathered from various sources including books, web sites, journals, magazines and newsletters. In researching this topic it was important to utilize information that was up-to-date and still relevant. All resources selected were from 1997 or later.

A variety of authors from a variety of mediums were read when selecting both the topics to be covered as well as the information under each topic. Topics and web sites presented in the paper had to be discussed by at least three or more authors read. In addition, when determining the topics to be covered only those in the traditional job seeking process that were strongly effected by the use of technology and the Internet were selected. After reading various information, it was found that some of the aspects of job searching that have not changed tremendously as it relates to technology and the Internet include interviewing, cover letters and follow-up notes. Therefore, these areas were not covered in this paper.
CHAPTER THREE
Analysis and Discussion

How does a job seeker go about pounding the “virtual pavement”?

Pounding the virtual pavement has many of the same similarities as pounding the pavement in the traditional way. Bolles (1998) emphasizes the need to plan no matter what type of job searching approach you take. As it relates to job hunting via the Internet, Himmelberg (1998) cautions: “A Web-based job search can be overwhelming. But if you’re selective in the sites you visit, smart about how you narrow your search and judicious with your time, the Web can work for you” (p. 1). In order to narrow the sites visited, it is helpful for a job seeker to determine their interests and research various careers as well as companies. Once this has been decided, visits to a more select list of job sites can be made.

Determine Interests

Traditionally, job seekers visit career centers, talk with career counselors, and possibly take some type of interest survey. High school students often rely on guidance counselors, teachers and parents for career information and direction. Another area now open to all job seekers is the so-called online career center. These centers found on the Internet offer career counseling, resume creation tips, interest surveys, interviewing tips, and access points to many job listing sites.
Table 1 lists some sites that offer a beginning for the job seeker, especially those in high school.

Table 1

Determining Your Interests—Helpful Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Site Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birkman Method Career Style Summary</td>
<td><a href="http://www.review.com/birkman">http://www.review.com/birkman</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-interest survey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Color Is Your Parachute</td>
<td><a href="http://www.washingtonpost.com/parachute">http://www.washingtonpost.com/parachute</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-career counseling site</td>
<td>-click Counseling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The site *What Color Is Your Parachute* by Bolles (1998) offers a place to start for job seekers of any age. According to author Steers (1998), "it (Bolles' site) was exactly what I'd been looking for: a gateway to online job hunting" (p. 195). This site offers a synopsis and Bolles' opinion about a variety of sites including job seeking advice sites, resume sites, job opening sites, and sites helpful when researching geographic areas, careers, salaries and companies.

The interactive testing section of this site is a place to begin when determining possible career avenues of interest. High school students may find this especially beneficial as they are still often trying to determine what type of career they might be interested in. Bolles' site directs visitors to several interest surveys and career test options. One that is simple and straight forward is the Birkman Method Career Style Summary.
This interest survey takes relatively little time to complete, yet offers insightful information. This site can be accessed directly or via Bolles' *What Color Is Your Parachute* site. The Birkman Summary gives visitors a twenty some question survey of either/or questions. After answering the questions, a description of interests and Birkman colors is given. One of four possible colors is given for style or “strengths you could bring to the work environment” and another color for interests or “activities you are drawn to” (Birkman, 1998). A description of a person with these colors is given along with a list of possible careers of interest. Bolles’ (1998) notes the Birkman Summary “has three sterling virtues: it is fast, with only 24 questions to answer; the format is attractive, with a great use of color in both the display and the printout of its results; and it often has some interesting career suggestions” (p. 1).

While online interest surveys should not be the only method of determining career interests, they are a good start for high school students because they provide relatively thought provoking information in a very short amount of time.

**Research Various Careers**

Upon determining possible career interests, the Internet can then be utilized to begin seeking information regarding specific careers of interest (See Table 2).
An informative career center site helpful in this endeavor is **JobSmart**, sponsored by the public libraries of California. While most of the job listings available at this site are located in California, the information regarding careers and job seeking skills is valuable to anyone. Riley (1998) notes “**JobSmart** is one of the best places online to find out how and where to look for employment both online and offline” (p. 47).

**JobSmart** offers a location in their Career Guides section entitled “Guides to Specific Careers.” This section contains site connections for various career fields ranging from accounting to zoological parks. These connections offer information on training/education needed, salary possibilities, the type of working environment and, what’s hot and what’s not. Under each site connection, **JobSmart** offers a description and comment regarding the information at the site. For example, under the Business Job Finder site **JobSmart** notes “An amazingly good site, packed with career information for business fields (banking,
investments, insurance, corporate finance, real estate.) Absolutely excellent!" (Mort, 1998). These types of comments are helpful in determining the sites to spend time visiting.

Another informative section within JobSmart is the Salary Info section which contains over 200 salary surveys. There are general salary surveys as well as profession specific surveys. Many of the profession specific surveys offer more than one location for salary information. One particular site, the Champion Personnel (1998) site under the Administrative Support Careers Section offers not only salary information, but detailed descriptions of various job titles as well. For instance, Champion Personnel (1998) site authors note that the title Administrative Assistant is not the same for every company, thus a wide salary range is often found. They then proceed to offer a variety of possible descriptions.

If more information is needed regarding a specific career, simply go to one of the Internet search engines and type in the name of the career. Job seekers should not limit themselves to just one Internet search engine. According to Saftner, (1997) each search engine functions differently, and no one engine will access every possible page. Table 3 provides a list of some of the search engines currently available.
Table 3

**Helpful Internet Search Engines**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Site Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alta Vista</td>
<td><a href="http://www.altavista.digital.com">http://www.altavista.digital.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excite</td>
<td><a href="http://www.excite.com">http://www.excite.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot Bot</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hotbot.com">http://www.hotbot.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InfoSeek</td>
<td><a href="http://www.infoseek.com">http://www.infoseek.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lycos</td>
<td><a href="http://www.lycos.com">http://www.lycos.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snap.com</td>
<td><a href="http://www.snap.com">http://www.snap.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WebCrawler</td>
<td><a href="http://webcrawler.com">http://webcrawler.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yahoo</td>
<td><a href="http://www.yahoo.com">http://www.yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An additional source of information regarding various careers is the Bureau of Labor Statistic's online location of the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1998). Over 200 careers are detailed with the following sections covered for each career listed: Nature of the Work; Working Conditions; Employment; Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement; Job Outlook; Earnings; Related Occupations; and Sources of Additional Information (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1998). According to McMahon (1998), "employment in the approximately 250 occupations covered accounts for about seven out of every eight jobs in the economy" (p. 13).
Research Specific Companies

For those interested in seeking information regarding careers with specific companies or types of companies, taking a look at various company job sites can be very worthwhile. According to Saftner (1997), many company web sites offer not only information about company business dealings and company philosophy, but also job opportunities available, names of contact people, regular mail addresses as well as e-mail addresses.

One way to locate a company web site is to again select an Internet search engine and type in the name of the company. If they have a web site under the name typed, it will often show up in the first several sites found by the search engine.

An additional resource for locating company web sites is Hoover's Online noted below in Table 4. McMahon (1998) notes Hoover's publishes information about thousands of private and public companies.

Table 4

Research Specific Companies—Helpful Site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Site Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hoover's Online</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hoovers.com/features/">http://www.hoovers.com/features/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- a listing and description of</td>
<td>topemps.html</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>various companies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the top employers section of Hoover's site, clicking one of the letters of the alphabet listed will bring up a listing of companies Hoover's has information on. Each company listed has a link going to a summary, and if they have a web site, there is a link to that too. Companies with fewer than 100 employees are not included in Hoover's listing of top employers (Hoover's Inc., 1998).

Once a company web site has finally been located, Riley (1998) notes the importance of "looking over the whole site, not just the employment opportunities section—What does the design say about the company? Is it conservative or contemporary? Is it well organized or difficult to follow? Is this the kind of place you would like to work?" (p. 24).

Once students have looked at the career counseling sites, filled out the questionnaires, and/or read the salary surveys as well as company and career web sites, they are ready to take the next step of the job seeking process—selecting a career in which to possibly pursue employment. The career direction they choose may change in the future, but the skills for locating job prospects of interest will still require the same type of planning.

Research General Job Listing Sites

The Internet has hundreds of sites that offer listings of thousands of jobs available worldwide (Bolles, 1998). The following general job sites listed in Table 5 are repeatedly recommended by various authors including Riley (1998) and Dixon (1998). Narrowing the list to a few will help keep students from
becoming overwhelmed with possible locations they can travel to to investigate job possibilities.

Table 5

Begin Researching Actual Job Listings—Helpful Sites

General Job Listing Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Site Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JobWeb's Catapult</td>
<td><a href="http://www.jobweb.org/catapult/">http://www.jobweb.org/catapult/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-a listing of links to many job sites</td>
<td>jgenlst.htm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monster Board</td>
<td><a href="http://www.monster.com">http://www.monster.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-offers a job seeker agent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NationJob Network</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nationjob.com">http://www.nationjob.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-offers a personal job scout</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net-Temps</td>
<td><a href="http://www.net-temps.com">http://www.net-temps.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-a listing of full time, part time and temporary jobs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Career Center</td>
<td><a href="http://www.occ.com">http://www.occ.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-offers a job seeker agent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of the factors that makes several of these web sites appealing is their use of a so called “electronic agent.” According to Steers (1998), “these agents automatically scour new postings, save them to your personal folder on the site and e-mail you when your ideal job appears” (p. 195). Most of the major sites have a variety of names for these agents such as personal job scout, job seeker agent, and personal search agent, and more and more sites are adding this feature every day. Steers (1998) notes these search agents can be very successful as long as criteria originally entered is narrow in scope.
Dixon (1998) mentions that the Monster Board and Online Career Center are both well established job seeking sites. These two sites offer electronic agents and allow users to post their resume into a password protected area which provides an element of security. These sites also offer links to resume building tips, online seminars regarding job seeking skills and information about various companies now hiring.

Another general job listing site is Net-Temps. The Net-Temps site offers listings of full-time, permanent work, but it is an excellent source for quality part-time and temporary work as well (Dixon, 1998). The database can be searched by the country as a whole, by state, or by city. It also offers a listing of hot jobs that need to be filled today.

The NationJob general job listing site gives users the opportunity to search for jobs via specialty pages which are job listings by specific employment categories. A few of the categories used include education jobs, legal jobs, and skilled technical jobs.

If these starting sites do not list jobs of interest to students, Job Web's Catapult site offers a listing of links to a variety of job sites including sites listed by general location in the United States and sites containing international job listings.
Research Specific Job Listing Sites

There are also web sites available for specific career fields. These sites range anywhere from healthcare and high tech jobs to state and federal government jobs. There are also unique sites offering jobs in the entertainment industry, the sports and recreation industry as well as national parks to name a few.

Table 6 contains a short, varied list of possible sites of interest to a high school student who is taking a look at future job and/or career possibilities:

Table 6

Begin Researching Actual Job Listings—Helpful Sites

Specific Job Listing Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Site Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medsearch - healthcare jobs</td>
<td><a href="http://www.medsearch.com">http://www.medsearch.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JobEngine - high tech jobs</td>
<td><a href="http://www.jobengine.com">http://www.jobengine.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CoolWorks - jobs at resorts, national parks,</td>
<td><a href="http://www.coolworks.com/showme">http://www.coolworks.com/showme</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ranches, cruises and camps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAJobs (or Fjobs) - US government site for federal jobs</td>
<td><a href="http://www.usajobs.opm.gov">http://www.usajobs.opm.gov</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sportlink - click find a job - jobs in sports equipment industry</td>
<td><a href="http://www.sportlink.com">http://www.sportlink.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Site Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ShowbizJobs.com</td>
<td><a href="http://www.showbizjobs.com">http://www.showbizjobs.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-jobs in film, TV, recording and attractions industry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Blue Line</td>
<td><a href="http://www.theblueline.com">http://www.theblueline.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-law enforcement jobs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOPjobs USA</td>
<td><a href="http://www.topjobsusa.com">http://www.topjobsusa.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-managerial, technical and professional jobs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa Jobs</td>
<td><a href="http://www.state.ia.us/jobs">http://www.state.ia.us/jobs</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Full and part time jobs in Iowa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attorneys @ Work</td>
<td><a href="http://www.attorneysatwork.com">http://www.attorneysatwork.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-legal profession jobs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Online Newspaper Classifieds

Another possible source for job listings would be the online newspaper classifieds. According to Steers (1998), online newspaper ads have been known to have listings for jobs not located on any online job search site. The following two sites shown in Table 7 offer links to online newspapers with job listings.

Table 7

Begin Searching Actual Job Listings—Helpful Sites

Newspaper Classifieds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Site Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CareerPath</td>
<td><a href="http://www.careerpath.com">http://www.careerpath.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-click jobs by newspaper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers Online</td>
<td><a href="http://www.newspaper.com">http://www.newspaper.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Martin (1998) notes the newspaper job ads at the CareerPath site combines roughly 250,000 help-wanted listings from 63 newspapers around the country including the Philadelphia Inquirer, Denver Post and L.A. Times” (p. 207).

Newspapers Online has links to various newspapers worldwide. Riley (1998) believes checking these online newspaper sites gives job seekers the opportunity to look for more local or regional jobs with smaller companies that may not be listed on the major job searching sites.

Once various job possibilities have been found, it is time to construct an appropriate resume, often one that can be read by both humans and machines.

What factors must be considered when creating an electronic resume?

In today’s job searching arena, the resume using various font styles and layouts and printed on nice stationery is no longer enough. This is because today’s resume may be read by both a human and a machine. According to Dixon (1998), electronic resumes have become a standard in business. Smith (1998) notes today’s resume must be scannable, searchable, and uploadable. In addition, there are also “Web” resumes along with resumes entered using pre-designed forms which are found at various job board sites on the Internet (Dixon, 1998). The following table lists some helpful sites when creating an electronically friendly resume.
Table 8

Electronic Resumes—Helpful Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Site Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JobSmart</td>
<td><a href="http://www.jobsmart.org">http://www.jobsmart.org</a> -click Resumes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca Smith’s eResumes &amp; Resources</td>
<td><a href="http://www.eresumes.com">http://www.eresumes.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Color Is Your Parachute</td>
<td><a href="http://www.washingtonpost.com/parachute">http://www.washingtonpost.com/parachute</a> -click Resumes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scannable Resume

Scanning allows a paper resume to be entered into a database without being retyped. Dixon (1998) states electronic resumes should “show a complete absence of the following elements: boldface, underlining, bullets, italics, fancy fonts, and tabbed columns” (p. 75-76). Smith (1998) also adds scanner friendly resumes should be printed on light colored 8 ½ x 11 paper and should not be folded when mailed. A study conducted by the Human Resource Systems Professionals found that nearly 400 companies in 1994 including all those with over 1000 employees, used automated hiring practices (How computers are changing the job-seeking process, 1998).

Searchable Resume

In order for today’s resume to be searchable, it must contain what are known as keywords. These keywords are generally condensed into a keyword
paragraph that highlights a job seeker's skills (Dixon, 1998). In addition, keywords are almost always nouns (Karl and Karl, 1997). According to Karl and Karl (1997), resumes of the past used action verbs such as led, earned, solved, supervised, increased and coordinated which are often overlooked in electronic job searches. Keywords should be nouns such as job titles (bio-chemist), schools attended (University of Northern Iowa), software able to use (Microsoft Word), or buzzwords (total quality management) (Gonyea, 1998). Keywords are often placed together in a paragraph located near the top of the resume often before or after the job objective (Dixon, 1998).

Uploadable Resume

Resumes sent electronically using e-mail need to be in a format that can be read by various computers, and this means using text-only formats such as ASCII or RTF (Karl and Karl, 1997). Unfortunately text-only formats do not allow any text formatting such as italics, bold, or underline. Also, Steers (1998) advises each line should be no more than 70 characters per line and a word processor's wordwrap feature should be turned off. Resumes saved in one of these formats are then pasted into an e-mail or added as an attachment to an e-mail that is sent to a potential employer. Steers (1998) suggests sending the e-mail to yourself first to see how it survives the electronic transfer.
Web Resumes

A Web resume is basically a traditional style resume posted to the World Wide Web at a particular address. In order for a resume to be posted, it must be formatted using HTML (HyperText Markup Language). For those who do not know how to use this language, there are resume programs available such as WebResume that automatically add HTML to any resume typed into the program. Steers (1998) notes that using programs such as WebResume allowed him to complete and post his resume in about 10 minutes instead of two hours.

According to Dixon “Web resumes are typically used as follow-up devices. Typically, you do not send a Web resume to an employer, but instead list your Web address on the electronic or paper resume sent” (p. 77).

Posting Resumes to Job Boards Using Forms

Posting resume information using a form located at a job board such as NationJob on the World Wide Web is relatively easy. According to Dixon (1998), most forms generally require the filling in of how-to contact information, kind of job wanted, salary wanted, education and experience. Some information may be pasted in text-only format directly into a message area.

While posting to a job board is a relatively quick process, determining where to post and what to post should be researched. One consideration is security. According to job expert Morris (cited in Bolles, 1998), never include personal or contact information in the body of your resume for safety and security.
purposes. Bolles (1998) suggests offering your e-mail address and phone number, but not street address, business address, names of past employers or references.

NationJob’s vice-president, Levinstein (1998) also suggests thoroughly evaluating sites before posting to them, i.e. are there companies listing jobs that you have heard of before; are there awards/reviews you recognize listed at the site; can you easily find out who owns the site; what guarantees of privacy do they provide? Other possibilities to look at include resume sites that can only be accessed with a password or sites that allow information to be posted without names and addresses, just e-mail and/or phone. This can be very important if a job seeker’s boss or someone else in their company searches resume banks for potential hires (Fitch, 1997).

Overall, it is recommended that today’s job seeker have both a nicely formatted paper resume that is read by the human eye and a computer friendly text resume with a keyword paragraph (Dixon, 1998).

What can educators do to facilitate the learning process as it relates to electronic job searching?

Students need to be given the opportunity to explore career possibilities using the Internet. Foster (1999) notes people have the potential to spend at least 86,000 hours of their life working. He further points out that based on various surveys he has read, approximately 75% of today’s workforce is unhappy with their job (Foster, 1999). In his book, Teenagers Preparing For the Real World,
Foster (1999) makes it clear students must seek out a career in which they have natural talents as well as have an interest. The Internet is one way for many students to research a large number of careers in order to possibly discover a career that is of interest to them. Knowing what specific careers require and how to use the Internet to determine those requirements gives students the opportunity to be more realistic about their choice.

Florida State University’s Career Center found that a large percentage of their visitors requested information on how the Internet could help them find employment (Epstein, 1997). Educators must be willing to accept that the Internet is a viable job seeking tool and not just a passing fad. According to Sumser of InterBizNet there were just 500 online job sites in 1995 and in 1998 there are an estimated 100,000 sites with some job listings or job information (Bolles, 1998). Estimates of job seekers using the Internet range from two to five million out of a total workforce of 138 million (Bolles, 1998). Even though this is not a large percentage of the workforce Bolles (1998) notes it is still worth a look as things continue to grow.

There are a variety of activities and projects students can complete in order to better prepare them for an electronic job search. These include creating keyword lists and electronic address lists, understanding the importance networking skills, creating digital portfolios, and developing a job search notebook.
Keyword Lists

In order to develop a more searchable resume, students need to be aware of the need to have a paragraph of keywords related to their skills, accomplishments, and previous experience. According to the article "How Computers are Changing the Job Seeking Process" (1998), keyword summaries are usually 20-30 words with each word capitalized, completely spelled out (no abbreviations) and then followed by a period. As stated previously, keyword lists are usually nouns and include job titles, essential skills, education and previous employer names. Also, according to the article mentioned above, "students should be advised to write down a checklist of keywords used by the companies they are interested in working for, especially the words included in the job listing. These should then be incorporated into their resumes" (How Computers are Changing the Job Seeking Process, 1998, p. 3). Students could practice developing keyword lists that are applicable to them now, to how they believe they will be in the future, and/or to actual job listings found.

Web Site Address Lists

Epstein (1997), Career Center Librarian at Florida State University, points out it is important to offer a type of written guide either on paper or web based. These guides should provide a listing of relevant and beneficial web site addresses relating to: researching careers, finding job listings, posting a resume, interviewing and follow-up (Epstein, 1997). Depending upon available resources
and skills, teachers could research various web sites and create a listing of applicable sites for their students. Creating a list as part of the district’s homepage would allow students to click and go directly to a particular site and allow for ease when updating the list.

**Discussing the Importance of Networking**

Networking is a skill important to all job seekers including teenagers (Foster, 1999). Foster (1999) states “the more people you meet, the better your chances of succeeding will be, regardless of which career you ultimately choose” (p. 21). Networking in any career has always been around, but online networking is somewhat new and can be more difficult and time-consuming than in-person networking because text is used instead of face-to-face contact (Dixon, 1998).

Some industry experts believe online networking is a good way to make prospective job contacts or an excellent way to quiz current and former employees about what it is like to work for a particular company (Fitch, 1997). Others believe chat rooms and newsgroups used in online networking are notorious refuges for hormone-crazed teens, scam artists, and assorted nut jobs and are basically 99% hokum (Martin, 1998). Networking online may not be the best approach for high school students in class for various reasons of safety and liability, however, the idea of networking itself can be a part of any career curriculum.
Dixon (1998) believes the single most important element of networking is having a caring and giving attitude, and it should also involve personalized contacts which include handwritten notes that are specific to each person, not generic. This aspect of networking could definitely be covered in class because as Foster (1999) points out, contacts that may play a role in our future can be made at almost anytime, even in high school.

Digital Portfolios

Digital or cyber portfolios are a set of web pages about an individual which contain items such as resumes, personalized voice greetings, photo greetings, links to previous employer’s web pages, displays of various school projects and any appropriate items of interest (Siegmann, 1998). At Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, all incoming students are required to “create and maintain a personal, password protected digital portfolio which serves as an easily accessed intellectual archive of a student’s achievements” (Kennedy, 1998, p. 1). Kennedy (1998) notes the portfolio helps students prepare for required internships or practicums, and faculty can better assist students because they have access to a more comprehensive record.

Those teachers with the skills and access to enough computers can utilize the digital portfolio concept with high school students as well. Students would be able to learn basic web page design skills and at the same time showcase their accomplishments and interests in a personal way. Students could also practice
creating various types of keyword resumes—one that is web based for the portfolio as well as a traditional one, one that is scannable, and one that can be e-mailed (text only).

Job Search Notebooks

Especially when electronic job searching, Dixon (1998) recommends putting together a job search notebook. According to Dixon (1998), the main purpose of this notebook is to help job seekers “keep good records, stay organized, and keep all information within easy striking distance” (p. 23). Dixon (1998) suggests the following items listed be used:

- A three ring binder at least an inch thick
- Paper that is never removed that is used to note when resumes are sent, to which sites and the pertinent contact information
- Printouts of job advertisements that have been responded to
- Printouts of resumes that have been sent out (when various versions are used)
- A form to take each caller’s phone number, title, company and pertinent job information
- Company research about companies applied to (i.e. printouts of company web pages)
- Copies or records of any follow-up notes sent (p. 23).

Dixon (1998) also notes keeping the above information in an electronic spreadsheet and printing it out regularly will also work. Developing a job search
notebook (in notebook or spreadsheet form) would be something positive for a high school student to experience.

As teachers begin looking at the various aspects of electronic job searching, more and more projects will present themselves. In this new frontier there will always be an ever-changing list of things students need to learn or be made aware of.
CHAPTER 4

Conclusions and Recommendations

Various new technologies including the Internet bring a new dimension to the job search. All of this gives the job seeker more opportunities to find a job or discover a career they may never have known about under the traditional method of job seeking. New technologies allow large numbers of qualified resumes to be searched for open positions versus a few selected by those in personnel. The Internet gives job seekers a chance to learn about and apply for positions they may never had known existed in the past because of their limited access to resources listing jobs.

Today’s educators must be willing to assist students in exploring these new job seeking arenas as well as provide them with information regarding the positives along with the negatives as it relates to electronic job searching. In addition, students need to know using the Internet is not the all out answer to finding a job, and the traditional method of searching must not be given up. Riley (1998) notes not everyone is advertising online, and Bolles (1998) emphasizes the Internet is not the lazy person’s method of job searching because you are now potentially in competition with thousands, even millions for some types of work.

Most all material reviewed for this paper points out that while the Internet provides great potential when looking for a job, the fact is only a very small percentage of job seekers find their job online at this point in time.
percentage will undoubtedly grow in the future, but for now online job searching should be just a part of a person's job hunt plans not the whole.

Educators need to help students understand that whether searching for a job electronically or not, the approach must still be active and aggressive. Overall, students should be given the opportunity to build a job search plan using any varying methods available and then be given the chance to practice carrying out this plan. Being given the time and tools to develop these planning skills will serve students well in the future no matter what types of job seeking methods become available.
References


How computers are changing the job-seeking process. (1998, January). Keying In, 8, 2.


