

How to avoid the 6 most common mistakes of job searching

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Sometimes an unintentional mistake can keep you from a great job opportunity. Here are some tips to help you avoid the common pitfalls many people make when seeking employment.

1. Don't let your social media tell the wrong story

Employers regularly search the internet to look for more information about job candidates. If the [social media](#) content they find seems concerning, they may not follow up with the candidate.

If an employer searches your name online, what will they find? Will the information (images, social content, etc.) help or hurt you in the job search? Making sure your online presence accurately represents who you are is an easy thing to fix. As you review your online activities, look at your online presence from an employer's perspective.

- If there's anything that could be perceived as negative or concerning, consider removing it.
- Double-check that all of your [social media accounts](#) are set to private.
- Be sure anything you are putting out there is a good representation of who you are. This includes email names, social handles, websites, hashtags, photos, etc.
- Update your profiles to show your activities and interests. For example, if you are passionate about making change in the world, show how you're involved in your community with photos, blogs, shared articles, etc.
- Be active in your field of interest on social media. Post industry-related news, questions, quotes or articles. Follow inspiring people and companies in your field, especially those you are targeting in your [job search](#).

2. Adapt your resume to match the job description

Submitting the same generic resume and cover letter for multiple [job applications](#) won't help you stand out to employers. Tailor your resume

and cover letter specifically for each opportunity, even if the [jobs](#) seem similar or you're not entirely decided about your career.

After reviewing a job description, take note of the keywords and phrases they use or the skills they are seeking. Your resume will get more traction if you use the same words and phrases. During interviews, be very clear about what you bring to the position and how passionate and enthusiastic you are for the opportunity.

3. Proofread, proofread, proofread

Little mistakes on your resume or cover letter can stand out in a big way, and can impact the employer's overall perception of you as a candidate. Double-check that the names, job titles and companies on your application materials match the job you are applying for—especially when you're creating tailored documents for each job application.

Next, get in the habit of proofreading everything. Print and read your resume and cover letter backwards to catch any typos or errors. Then, ask a friend or family member to proofread them or visit Career Services to have a career development advisor look them over as well. You can never be too careful!

4. Do your research

Employers have shared that their biggest pet peeve at career fairs is meeting with potential [job candidates](#) who aren't familiar enough with the company or what they do. This can give the impression that you aren't that serious about the job opportunity.

A few minutes of research can make all the difference. Read the "about" section of their website or company blog. Check their social media

accounts to gain a sense of office culture. Employers love to see that you have taken time to get to know the company you're interested in. This can also help you prepare interview questions of your own to demonstrate your knowledge and desire for the position.

5. Use your network

Many people think that job searching is a solitary process, but it's more than okay to ask for help! Your network is there to support you in this journey.

It may not feel like it, but you likely already have a wide network to rely on. Between family, friends, professors, supervisors and CU alumni, there are people who are ready and willing to help you in your search. Reach out to let them know what you are looking for and how they may be helpful. Whether they are available for proofreading or can connect you to a hiring manager with a great opportunity, it never hurts to ask. Continue to grow your network this year by attending career-related events on campus.

6. Don't be afraid to go for it

The only sure way of not being considered for a job is to never apply for it. Sometimes we talk ourselves out of great opportunities if we don't think we meet all the qualifications listed on the job description. If you are attracted to a position and think you can do it well, apply—even if you don't meet every single item on the list. Most employers will interview candidates if they meet most of their criteria.

Provided by University of Colorado at Boulder

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