

Making the Cut When Applying for Jobs Online

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■ A QUICK LOOK:

Gone, for the most part, are the days of handing employers paper job applications. With today's companies switching to more web-based hiring practices, research shows that almost half of the job applicants with disabilities describe applying online as either difficult or impossible. So how can people with disabilities make it to the top of the virtual stack of applications? This article provides some of those winning strategies.

■ KEY FINDINGS:

Studies revealed that many online processes are unintentionally inaccessible to people with disabilities. Some of the issues people with disabilities face include:

- Difficult application navigation,
- Timeout restrictions,
- Poor quality screen contrast, and
- Confusing, inconsistent instructions.

Despite these barriers, there are still ways for people with disabilities and the people who support them to achieve success with the online hiring process.

■ PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE:

These are some of the quick tips compiled from recruiters, employers, and accessible technology and disability experts.

- Include keywords and skills from the job description in your application
- Go after jobs that match your skill set and interests
- Fill out every section of the application and check for errors
- Make sure there's nothing on your social media accounts that would give a bad impression
- Ask for assistance or accommodations from the company if needed
- Network and leverage your personal connections to help you stand out
- Verify that the company is hiring and prepare a strong resume
- Before filling out the application, visit the company and introduce yourself

■ MORE ABOUT THIS ARTICLE

As the hiring process becomes more and more automated, it is important for job seekers to continue to look for new ways to stand out in a sea of online applications. Here are a few facts and figures from the article:

- Fifty-eight percent of employers let job applicants know they provide accommodations for online application
- Seventy percent of employers who hire people with disabilities are more likely to hire through employee referrals
- Sixty percent of those employers also hire people with disabilities through friends or word of mouth referrals
- They were less likely to hire using online job boards or service-provider agencies

There are many companies out there who are looking for diversity in their workforce and for people with a wide range of backgrounds and skills. For job seekers, including those with disabilities, adopting some or all of the strategies within this article can help them navigate the online process with a little more ease and a lot more success.

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