

We've compiled these *do's and don'ts* for internet job responses. We are sharing them so that candidates can present themselves to prospective recruiters or employers in the best light possible...

Don't...

- ✓ Send a blank email with your cover and resume as separate attachments. Why? Because you are squandering an opportunity to show you know how to communicate.
- ✓ Especially don't send a form response that identifies the wrong job, e.g., "I am submitting my resume in regards to your current opportunity for a VP Sales/Business Manager" when the job is financial.
- ✓ Reply to a posting with a generic letter, especially one with a "why me" headline or canned responses.
- ✓ Send an email or leave a voicemail asking for more details before you respond to a posted opportunity. Everyone gets the same information at the beginning. The recruiter makes decisions based on your response.
- ✓ Forget to edit! Bad spacing, bad punctuation, bad grammar and bad spelling are all sloppy, and don't show you off well. Real examples: "I role up my sleeves..." "I have an pretty unque skill set."
- ✓ Send a cover memo like this: "Hi: I have CFO experiences with banking." It won't get you an interview. Nor will a two-page memo. Be concise and hit the relevant high points.
- ✓ Don't include your personal motto, your church affiliations, or information about the custody arrangement you have with your ex-spouse.
- ✓ Don't write that you are a "perfect fit;" tell us that you believe there is a good fit between your qualifications and the posted requirements, then explain why.

- ✓ Don't put a read-receipt request in your email. The recruiter will almost always click no, and it's annoying.
- ✓ Don't follow up with an email request that we verify receipt of your application—unless it's been several weeks. If we don't get back to you, then shame on us. Service-oriented firms will respond to you, but not immediately in all cases.
- ✓ Don't call your resume a "C.V." (unless you live outside the U.S. or are not native to the U.S.). C.V.s and resumes are different, and you show potential employers your ignorance if you don't know that. A C.V. is used in academic, scientific, or research settings; it lists education, teaching, publications, affiliations; generally it is not appropriate for business in the U.S.
- ✓ Don't send a resume at 150% of scale. That won't get you more attention, and it forces the reader to resize it just to read it.
- ✓ Don't use odd or creative fonts.
- ✓ No fancy borders or multi-colored headers, please.
- ✓ If you have been working for 15 or 20 years, it is not necessary to cram all your experience on one page. By the same token, you really should be able to provide a concise snapshot in 3 or 4 pages—at the most.
- ✓ Don't copy the career summary from your resume and use that in your cover letter/memo. We notice redundancies.
- ✓ Please don't use a cute email address with a nickname ("wolfman") or a group or family name ("juliechristiesallyken"). When we sort emails or look for individuals, we rarely can find them using aliases. Use a professional address with your name in it.

Do...

- ✓ Cover the obvious. If the job is in a different geography, be sure to include why you are open to moving. Show that you have an understanding of the complications of relocation. Do you have an interest (family, career) in the client's area?
- ✓ Send the final version of your resume, not one with your edits showing.
- ✓ Proofread your response and resume. Then have a friend read it.

- ✓ Address the individual whose name appears in the posting, if there is one. “To Whom it May Concern,” while formally proper, doesn’t help demonstrate that you are paying attention. By the same token, “Dear sir/madam” (unless the person’s gender is not clear), “Hi!”, or a blank salutation, aren’t recommended either.
- ✓ Customize your cover letter to the specifics of the job. Avoid: “Hello. Please allow me to introduce myself. I recently learned of your search for a President/GM through...” (This impersonal letter begins by identifying the wrong job.)
- ✓ Indicate your legal work status if your education and work history are/were mostly from outside the U.S.
- ✓ Leave off the totally unnecessary “references provided upon request.” We know you’ll provide references.
- ✓ Include your address on your resume. Include the locations (city, state) for each job held. Recruiters and employers pay attention to geography—for good reasons, such as real estate differentials and client limits on relocation—and to mask your location simply lowers your appeal.
- ✓ If you are asked to provide a brief cover memo about your relevant experience, do so. This is a marketing opportunity, and part of how you differentiate yourself.
- ✓ Speak, briefly, to the qualifications listed, but don’t reiterate them.
- ✓ Remember to attach your resume. You’d be amazed how often we get an email with no resume, even when the cover says it’s attached. What do you think we conclude about attention to detail?
- ✓ When you telephone to leave a follow-up message—and you should—be sure to spell your name and say your telephone number twice. And PLEASE don’t use a cell phone, because it invariably cuts out on the name or number portion of the message, rendering it useless.