

5 tips to job hunting in the age of AI

The rapid advancement of AI and online recruitment tools have given the job hunting process a total makeover, while creating a new set of challenges and opportunities for job seekers.



Image source: zimmytws – [123RF.com](https://www.123RF.com)

“The big buzz of last year was the introduction of ChatGPT and the subsequent rapid development in AI, which had most people checking whether AI would be proverbially eating their jobs. But there is another consideration which has received less attention in terms of AI in the jobs marketplace, and that is the fact that new tech could mean that your candidacy falls through the cracks before you even get a chance to land that dream role,” says Advaita Naidoo, Africa MD at executive search firm, Jack Hammer.

She says on the one hand, with the rise of AI and online recruitment tools, job seekers have access to resources that can help them take a more active role in their job search.

“By leveraging these tools, you can reduce the time and effort required to find the right job and increase your chances of success,” she says.

Ease of application

But on the other hand, these tools mean that applications for positions have increased exponentially, which significantly reduces a candidate’s chance of being noticed in the first place.

“If you are looking for a new position in 2024, you are going to have to be a lot more proactive to catch the eye of hiring managers, as well as being significantly more organised on your job search journey,” says Naidoo.

Through sites such as LinkedIn, candidates can now, at the click of a button, register their interest in a company or a position. While this ease of application almost instantly opens up a larger pool of potentially suitable positions, it comes at a cost.



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“From my conversations with pretty much everyone on companies’ hiring side, the anecdotal evidence indicates that application numbers have increased at least fivefold over the past year. While there are definitely more people in the market, this phenomenon is no doubt also closely linked to the increased ease of application.

“The implication for job seekers is that you have to change your approach if you want to be noticed by the hiring manager with thousands of applications in their inbox, to have a chance at landing that coveted first interview,” says Naidoo.

Naidoo says anyone considering a career move in 2024 should update their search strategy as follows:

1. **Get your LinkedIn profile in great shape.** When searching for advice and tips online on how to do this, it is essential to get the most up-to-date information as it keeps rapidly changing. LinkedIn is the first place hiring managers go to screen a candidate, and if you drop the ball there, it truly is an own goal.
2. **Make sure your CV and resume are meticulously drafted** in line with current best practice. These days, CVs should be 2-3 pages max. Even if you have several decades of experience, condense that information. Your 2022 CV isn’t going to suffice anymore – it needs to be updated in line with what works for hiring managers in 2024. Your CV is your shop window, and no shop window with a two-year-old display is going to spark interest.

In particular, eliminate long and rambling copy, and get your keywords right for the automated parts of the process, before a human eye would even land on your application. You have to do your homework to determine what the current requirements are for your industry and what works and what doesn’t for CVs.



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3. **Keep a spreadsheet of all your job search activity.** Within a couple of weeks of doing this work, you should have lots of irons in the fire, leads, and conversations on the go. If you don’t coordinate and track your actions, it’s going to get messy and make you look unprofessional.
4. **Put in the effort and network.** Data shows that particularly at senior levels, around 75% of the time, people land their next role through networking. It is absolutely the non-negotiable skill that every single person, particularly those

who are looking for jobs in 2024, need to master. Which brings us back to the spreadsheet in point 3. Your networking is going to land you leads, but you need to keep track of who you met where, what was said, and what referrals you have in the pipeline. Tailor your strategy accordingly.

5. **Get your mindset right.** Job search in 2024 can take longer than you expect, and can cause anxiety and frustration. Stay positive and don't take it personally when you get declined, or if you are asked to send your CV five times to the same person, or get called back for 10 interviews.

"The markets now are different to how they were two years ago, when – if you'd been laid off, you could literally take one breath, post something on LinkedIn and line up some interviews relatively quickly. Market conditions and recruitment tools have changed that, so you're going to need to be more active, more focused, and more structured in your approach.

"While the changed landscape presents challenges, it has also opened up new opportunities for those who are willing to take a proactive and strategic approach. By leveraging the latest tools and technologies, and by being diplomatic, open, honest, and authentic, you can substantially increase your chances of finding the right role to take your career to the next level."

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