Are you *REALLY* a good fit for the job?

You look at the job title in bold print, skim the job description and click a button to submit your application. With today's technology it only takes a matter of minutes to apply for a job online, but how do you know if the job is really a match for you?

Meeting the Employer's Needs

Even though it may take just a few minutes to read through a job description, recruiters and employers have spent a great deal of time narrowing down the ideal skills they are looking for in potential candidates. Kimberly Bohinick, a Market Director with Kforce, says candidates who fulfill the majority of what is asked on a job posting are more likely to get noticed by an employer or recruiter.

"Ultimately if they [employers] have five requirements listed on a job description, they would ideally want a candidate that meets five out five," says Bohinick. However, if you don't meet all of the requirements listed but can detail similar industry experience, it's important to highlight that in your resume, cover letter or by informing your recruiter.

First, take a closer look at the job description and make your search easier by taking a few extra minutes to analyze what is listed and determine if your skills and experience match. Next, pay attention to which requirements come first in the job posting.

"Job responsibilities are usually written in order of priority," says Bohinick. "If there are ten responsibilities, the first three or four may be the most important." Keep those responsibilities in mind, especially if you are asked to come in for an interview. You can remind the employer how you meet the most important requirements listed.

In deciding if you are the right match for a job, it is also important to consider how you will match the company culture. If the company name is listed in the job posting, research ahead of time by visiting their website. Look for similarities between the company's values and your own. Candidates who have values and skills similar to the hiring company are the ones more likely to meet the needs of the employer and adapt faster once in the new role.

Consider the Skills Listed

Pay attention to the skills listed in your resume and how they match the requirements in the job description. If a job description asks for candidates who have completed at least 12 projects with a $5 million budget, employers will look for detailed facts on how you implemented strategies to accomplish those specific projects.

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Education and certification can also be a factor in determining whether you make a good candidate for a particular job. On average, finance and accounting positions may require a two or four year degree. On the other hand, in the technology industry, it is sometimes more important to have experience in specific skilled areas. For example, some technology positions need candidates who have managed databases or worked with programming languages.

In many cases, candidates should also aspire to be ahead of the curve. Especially in temporary positions, candidates will be expected to start work right away and hit the ground running, so it's important for you to keep abreast of the latest developments in your industry.

While dissecting each piece of the job description, you should keep in mind that the bottom line is to identify how your experiences would help address the employer's requirements.

Quality vs. Quantity

Instead of focusing on applying for as many jobs as possible, finding positions that are a better match for you can make your job search more productive. By identifying your own strengths and promoting your unique skills, you will be able to identify employers who can benefit from your talents. In other words, don't waste time going after jobs you think you are just an okay fit for, target the positions where you believe you could be a great fit.

"Know what you're good at, know what you can bring to the table and target those talents," says Bohinick. In the end, if you really are a good fit for the job you're more likely to be an effective and successful team member.

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