

## TIP FOR ONLINE APPLICANTS: EXPLORE ALL YOUR OPTIONS

*Summary: Find out how to deal with rejection in the age of digital job applications.*



**Question:** What is the expected rate of return on submitting job applications online? I am a discouraged online job seeker who needs information.

**Answer:** As with a direct-mail campaign, the expected rate of return is generally in the single digits. If you are eventually one of the successes, you can celebrate in spite of the generally low returns. In the meantime, however, expand your search methods to include a variety of approaches that will increase the likelihood of connecting with potential employers.

Start by identifying a list of target companies that you want to approach based on your interests and their promising profiles—for example, employers that ideally are in a growth mode and likely to have a need for your particular skill set. Once your list is ready, create a marketing plan to capture employers' attention.

Research each company's products, culture, and direction to help position yourself as a person whose talents would serve it well. Get the names of potential hiring managers, and contact them directly. It helps if you can get a referral from someone who can open a door for you. Even if there are no current openings, attempt to lay the groundwork for future possibilities. Call or e-mail to request a meeting to introduce yourself and to find out more about the organization. If managers won't agree to meet with you live, try a brief telephone conversation. If that wish isn't granted, at least send a personalized cover letter and polished resume.

Most important, get off the computer and get out into the world. The more people you can connect with about prospects, through professional associations and social events, the greater the likelihood of securing interviews for desirable positions.

**See the following articles for more information:**

- [6 Key Job Search Assumptions](#)
- [33 Quick Tips to Improve Your Networking Experience](#)