

Think Shoe Leather, Not Mouse

Why do job seekers spend inexhaustible hours in front of computer screens day in and day out? Though most jobs are obtained through networking, employment opportunities still can be found on the Internet, so by all means surf job boards but not to the point where this is all you do from nine to five.

This is easier said than done, of course, because once you sit down with a mouse and keyboard you instantly become mesmerized by the lure of technology.



You check e-mail. You Google for tips on resume writing. You edit your resume (again...!). You browse your favorite job board for new postings. You check e-mail, again. You log onto instant messaging. You register with the new job board that Joe told you about. You log onto your three networking sites (or is it four?) and search for new connections and group messages. You check e-mail, again.

Before you realize it, the day past, but despite being “busy,” nothing materialized, you have eye strain, a stiff neck, a shooting pain up your arm from your wrist to your shoulder, and a throbbing headache. And guess what? You are still unemployed.

As humorous as this may seem, it is not an unrealistic representation of how many job seekers spend their days. Try some of these quick tips instead.



Surf at Night

Job opportunities can be found on the Internet, so by all means surf the job boards, but do it at night and on weekends. With a reported 80% of all jobs found through personal referral and networking, don't spend 80% of your time chasing the remote 20% of possible opportunities. Use your days to work the phones, get out and meet people, and when available, attend workshops and conferences. Think shoe leather, not mouse.

Set Time Limits for Surfing

Sitting in front of a computer screen is draining and can be unhealthy if you do it for prolonged periods of time. Set a schedule for yourself and if you have to, set an alarm clock (an Internet alarm clock if you insist) to remind yourself that it is time to get up, stretch your arms and legs, and walk around for a while.

Let Technology Search for You

Most job boards allow you to create parameters for positions that fit your specifications, and then save matching opportunities in a job cart for you or send you e-mail alerts when new jobs are posted that fit your criteria. Many also offer RSS feeds directly to your personal homepage. Take advantage of these features and have the site do the surfing for you.

Take an Internet Addiction Test

These questions were culled from several Internet Addiction tests that you can take - where else - on-line.

	Yes	No
YOUR TIME ON-LINE		
1. Do you stay on-line longer than anticipated?		
2. Do you neglect other activities to spend more time on-line?		
3. Do you check e-mail before something else that you need to do?		
4. When on-line, do you find yourself thinking ' <i>just a few more minutes?</i> '		
5. Do you try to cut down the amount of time you spend on-line but never succeed?		
6. Do you skip meals because you are busy surfing?		
7. Are you losing sleep because of late-night surfing?		
YOUR TIME OFF-LINE		
8. When offline, do you anticipate how long it will be before you log back on?		
9. Do you feel anxious when you are off-line?		
YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS		
10. Do you purposely choose to spend more time on-line rather than networking?		
11. Do you have more virtual friends than real friends?		
12. Do you get annoyed if someone interrupts you while you are on the Internet?		
13. Do others complain to you about the amount of time you spend on the Internet?		
14. Do you try to cover up how long you've been on-line?		
15. When others comment about your time spent on-line, do you become defensive?		

Add up your number of "YES" answers and find your degree of addiction on the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
AVERAGE							MODERATE				COMPULSIVE			



Use technology, but use it wisely and healthfully.

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