

Why don't I get a call back?

Andrew -

It happened again. I saw the most perfect job! I had all the right qualifications, experience and skills and the company was exactly where I saw myself working. I was so excited as I wrote my resume and cover letter!

I waited and waited and I didn't hear a peep! Not an email, a phone call or even a form letter.

Why don't employers call me back?!! It is so frustrating and I feel like I keep sending my resumes to the proverbial black hole!

Perplexed in Superior

Dear Perplexed:

One of the most common complaints and the most frustrating experiences for job seekers is finding the perfect job posting, putting your blood, sweat and tears into your resume and cover letter, following all the application instructions to make sure it is sent in on time and then not hearing back from the company!

The job seeker is then left to sulk and rationalize as to 'why'; and then the voices start.

My resume stunk.

I'm too old.

I'm too young.

I'm over qualified.

I asked for too much money.

My resume didn't reach the company.

Should I call? The job posting says no calls!

I'm no good.

And on and on and on it goes.....and before we know it, these 'stinking thinking' thoughts have dampened your confidence, courage and overall self esteem.

So why don't companies call back? It seems simple enough. Send everyone who applies an automatic response that says something like:

"Thanks for applying. We are honored you want to work for us. We'll be reviewing resumes through June 30 and then making some decisions and will contact you if we believe you are the right fit moving forward. If you don't hear back from us, please know that we truly appreciate your interest in working for us and will keep your resume on file. Again, thanks for applying!"

At the very least, this response lets the job seeker know that the resume was received and that there is a date in which decisions will be made.

But a lot of employers choose not to respond to resumes that have been submitted and believe it or not, it usually has nothing to do with you personally or professionally. It has



more to do with the process of applying and how companies go about searching for talent.

For example:

- You'll see a few job postings in today's list that say something like '...we will accept resumes until such-and-such a date or until we receive X number of resumes.' OK – so that's the clue to get your resume in quickly....for all job postings! The fact is that HR offices are overwhelmed with resumes applying for the various positions they post. HR executives have told me that many times, they will only review the first 50/75/100 etc. resumes simply because they don't have the bandwidth to review more than that and they are usually successful in identifying candidates in that first batch of resumes.
- Computerized Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) are searching for keywords and phrases in each resume and will identify the candidates with the highest ranking for the position. Yes, a computer is determining if you will be hired! Some may call it cold and heartless, but HR execs call it efficient. If your resume does not match the keywords and phrases the company is looking for, your resume most likely will never be seen by an HR recruiter. How do you overcome this? The job posting is a road map for the job. In your resume and cover letter, use EXACT keywords and phrases listed under requirements, qualifications, years of experience, background, etc.
- The job is not 'real.' Yes, it's true, from time to time, companies post jobs that have either already been filled internally or positions that are not going to be filled at all. Often, it's a diversity requirement to appear that their hiring practices are fair, but in reality, they have different motives in mind. But, they can say they posted the job and it was advertised to a 'wide-net' audience.
- The HR recruiter has identified someone outside of the pool of candidates that have applied. In fact, over 60% of new hires come from referrals. Often the referrals are from an employee of the company through their referral bonus program where employees get paid if they successfully refer someone to be hired. Other times, it is simply through networking where a candidate has heard about a job and has worked his networks to have calls placed and secured an interview. The important thing for all job seekers is to try and identify people you know – former colleagues, bosses, neighbors, whoever! – and make connections to the company this way.
- Should you call if the posting says "no calls" but you haven't heard back? Absolutely! Wait at least two weeks and if you haven't heard back, contact the company and make sure your resume was received. Try to contact either the HR department or the hiring department. Be very polite and explain you've sent in a resume and hadn't heard back and wanted to know the status of the position.

Bottom Line: Keep applying and keep confident in what you have to offer to employers. Your education, experience, background, accomplishments etc. are valuable and sooner or later you will find the perfect fit!