

Job Seekers Frustrated by “Black Hole” of Online Applications

Employers Miss Out on Top Talent Due to Lack of Communication

“Conversation is Needed”

TORONTO, Oct. 24, 2018 – While technology has made it easier than ever to find job openings, job seekers have become increasingly frustrated with the lack of direct communications during the application process.

According to Colleen Gaudette, an Express Employment Professionals franchise owner in Windsor, Ontario, job applicants feel that applying online is a black hole.

“Candidates frequently complain about the process of applying for jobs online,” she said. “They find it tedious and time-consuming, with very little opportunity to stand out to an employer. They really dislike that employers almost never respond or follow up with them.”

Jessica Culo, an Express franchise owner in Edmonton, Alberta, offers a similar perspective.

“Job seekers are extremely frustrated with online applications, with many feeling hopeless,” she said. “The online application process is focused on key words, which makes it very difficult to communicate why you are a good candidate for a job. Applicants feel like numbers and not people.”

Culo’s office now responds to every single applicant. The surprise and appreciation she reports that applicants express for being contacted demonstrates the low expectations that so many job seekers have for online applications.

Both Gaudette and Culo warn that being overly reliant on online job portals can cause employers to overlook strong applicants, which is a real danger in today’s tight labor market.

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Express
EMPLOYMENT PROFESSIONALS

“The human element is important for many reasons,” explains Culo. “For example, identifying character fit via keyword searches in online applications is impossible. In addition, there are things that can be better explained and understood in person, such as gaps in employment.”

Gaudette agrees that the human element is important.

“Online applications de-humanize the process and employers miss out on understanding the character of the candidates, their motivation and key employability soft skills that go beyond what their job duties require,” Gaudette said.

So why are businesses so reliant on impersonal online applications?

“Because of convenience and lack of time,” Culo said. “But the cost of not hiring the right people, in my opinion, far outweighs any cost savings experienced. I am not saying to do away with online applications, but I think it should be one part of a bigger process.”

“Businesses can be overwhelmed with applicants,” adds Gaudette. “But if you don’t have an application process that allows you to review candidates properly, you may miss the best person for the job.”

To give job applicants more opportunities for direct communication, while still embracing the convenience of online applications, Express recently launched [ExpressJobs](#), an app that allows applicants to submit applications and then stay in touch directly with their local staffing offices and monitor up-to-the-minute details. This approach eases fears of applications going into a “black hole”, while still allowing employers to process high volumes of applications.

“As with any technology, there are growing pains. Online job applications are certainly a great example,” said Bill Stoller, Express CEO. “For a while, it represented a great new frontier. But now it’s time to rethink online hiring. Some level of human element in the initial stages of the hiring process is important to find the right match for the job seeker and the employer. Going forward, successful companies will find a way to allow for more direct communication between recruiters and job seekers at the outset.”

If you would like to arrange for an interview to discuss this topic, please contact Ana Curic at (613) 858-2622 or email ana@mapleleafstrategies.com.

About Bill Stoller

William H. "Bill" Stoller is chairman and chief executive officer of Express Employment Professionals. Headquartered in Oklahoma City, the international staffing company has more than 800 franchises in the U.S., Canada and South Africa. Since its inception, Express has put more than 6 million people to work worldwide.

About Express Employment Professionals

Express Employment Professionals puts people to work. It generated \$3.4 billion in sales and employed a record 540,000 people in 2017. Its long-term goal is to put a million people to work annually. For more information, visit ExpressPros.com.