



FREE

Job-Hunt[®] 15 Minute Guide

Choosing Safe Job Boards

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**US News
& World Report
Top Site for
Finding Work**
Job-Hunt.org

**Forbes
Best of the Web
for Job Hunting**
Job-Hunt.org

**PC Magazine
Best of the Internet
for Careers**
Job-Hunt.org



For most people, job boards are NOT the solution to their job search, and many job seekers waste too much time on them. However, ignoring job boards completely is not a good idea, either, so you need to be a savvy user of job sites to have the safest job search.

Choose the job sites you use very carefully! *Not every site is a legitimate job site, or a good site, even if it's listed in Job-Hunt* (we are very careful of the sites we list, but the site or the domain can be sold and the site may degrade as a result).

Note: We have found completely bogus "job sites" – no jobs at all, just resume collection. If we've found some, more exist. We've also found fake employer websites, fake jobs, and more [scams](#), too. So, BE CAREFUL! Trust AFTER you verify!

Choosing Safe Job Boards

16 Critical Criteria for Choosing the Best Job Site for You

If a site fails *any* of the first 6 "Safety" criteria, *don't use it!* You need to know that a site is at least somewhat trustworthy before you use it.

The 6 "Safety" Criteria

If a site fails any of these tests, *do not use it*. Find another one. Simple as that.

1. Who owns the site?

Look for contact information on the site. Not just a form for visitors to complete to ask a question, but a name, address, and phone numbers. Then, verify that the contact information is genuine:

- Google the address and phone numbers. Are they apparently real?
- Check the business name in Superpages.com business listings, if they provide a business name.
- If they don't provide the name, but they do provide a phone number, use the Superpages "[advanced search](#)" to do a lookup by phone number. Does it show the business and/or location claimed by the website?
- As a last resort, call one of the phone numbers to see if someone answers from the organization running the site.

Be very cautious if there is no contact information or if you cannot verify that business name and contact information are genuine.

More on Safe Job Search:

- [Job Search Scam Avoidance Guide Home](#)
- [Scam/Phish Proof Quiz](#)
- [Quiz Solution](#)
- [Understanding IP's and Domains](#)
- [Dangerous Assumptions](#)
- [Job Search Scam Self-Defense Sniff Test](#)
- [9 Characteristics of a Job Scam](#)
- [Driver's License Job Scam](#)
- [Reshipper & Payment Job Rep Scams](#)

Choosing Safe Job Boards

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If there is no contact information visible on the site, check the domain name in DomainTools.com for ownership information. If the domain name ownership is “private,” the email address is “privacy@privacy-guard.org,” or the ownership is private “by proxy,” don’t trust it.

A legitimate website has no acceptable reason for hiding ownership. So, don’t use it!

2. What does Google tell you about it?

Google the site’s name to see what Google shows you.

If there is no information in Google about the site, be extremely cautious! It could be a brand new site (and thus have few or low quality jobs), or it could be bogus.

If the only information in Google are links to job postings, be extremely cautious.

Google should link to other sites which mention the job site, in news or reviews of the site or articles about job search.

3. Do you have to “register” a profile or a resume before you can search through the jobs?

You need to evaluate the site, first, to determine if it has the jobs you want before you register. Some sites have the wrong jobs or even no jobs, and you don’t want to waste your time or expose your personal information on a site that is useless to you.

Requiring registration first should be a red flag that the site is not seri-

ously interested in helping you find a job, particularly if the site does not have a Privacy Policy posted telling you what they do with your registration information.

- Be particularly suspicious of a site which trumpets “free resume posting” services. Very, very few legitimate job boards require job seekers to pay to post their resumes.

Find another site – thousands of Web job sites are available that allow you to try before you join.

4. Does the site have a comprehensive Privacy Policy?

If the site does not have a privacy policy – one which is easy to find – don’t use the site.

Read the Privacy Policy before you register at a job site!! The privacy policy should disclose to you the information that the site collects and what they do with it (i.e., sell or rent your e-mail address, etc.).

- Pay particular attention to what happens to your resume!

Some alleged job sites seem to exist only to collect your contact information (e-mail address, home address, phone number, etc.) so that they can sell the information to companies that will bombard you with advertising or worse. You provide a lot of very personal information to job sites, and you need to know how it will be used.



Do not assume that a TRUSTe, BBBonline, or other “privacy seal” program ensures that your privacy is protected!! I have seen sites that fake their authorization to use the seal.



You must verify the seal before you trust it:

- Click on the seal. The link should take you to a page on the privacy seal's site that specifically about the site which has the seal, the one where you found the link that you just clicked.
- If the seal not clickable on the job site, it's not legitimate.
- If clicking on the seal takes you to the privacy seal organization's home page, rather than the page about the job site, the seal is not legitimate.
- The page on the privacy seal organization's Website should specifically address the site with the seal you clicked on. So, if you clicked on a link on the privacy seal displayed on JoesGreatNewJobSite.com, the page should have information specifically about JoesGreatJobSite.com.

5. Who has access to the database of resumes?

Posting your resume in an easily-accessed resume databases may well result in an increase in junk e-mail and/or the possibility of an increase in identity theft and other fraud involving your personal information.

Don't be impressed by (or use) a website that offers employers “free access” to resumes! That free access is an invitation to scammers and less

ethical marketers to collect your personal information. It may be good for them, but it's not good for you!

The Privacy Policy *should* tell you who has access to the resumes.

Check out the “employer” side of the job site to see how easy it is to gain access to the resumes. If resume access is free, or only a nominal fee is charged for access to the resumes, find another job site.

6. Can you limit access to your personal contact information?

The best sites provide you with options to protect your contact information (your name, e-mail address, street address, phone numbers, etc.). Options range from blocking access only to the contact information to keeping your resume completely out of the resume database searched by employers. Choose the option that works best for you.

- If you are currently employed, limiting access to your contact information can help you protect your existing job. (See Job-Hunt's [Cyber-Safe Resume](#) article for tips on transforming your standard resume into a Cyber-Safe Resume for protection.)

Yes, blocking access to your contact information may make it more difficult for an employer to reach you quickly, but it can also add to your market value in the eyes of an employer. You may be viewed as someone with a good job to protect and/or someone who is a knowledgeable Web user.

The 10 “Effectiveness” Criteria

1. Does the site charge you for access to job opportunities?

Very rarely should a job seeker pay for access to open jobs, online or offline. In general, if there is a charge to the job seeker, find another site.

Some job sites for “executives” do charge a fee. Before you pay, look for some written guarantees of the quality (and, maybe, the exclusivity) of the opportunities plus recent references from satisfied clients.

The only other online exceptions that seem legitimate are the Web sites by professional or industry associations and societies. These sites may provide job opportunities (or resume posting) only for members. In that case, you may want to join the association, if you are interested in the association anyway and plan to attend meetings, interact with the members online, get access to special information and reports, or gain some other additional benefit from your membership.

2. Is the site easy to use?

You should be able to easily find a way to search for the jobs you want – specifying the location and the type of job (by keyword or some other method of choosing). When you’ve found a job you like, it should be easy



for you to apply for it. If you want to post your resume, that should be an easy process, too. And there should be easy-to-follow directions in case you get lost or confused.

If you feel inept or uncomfortable using a site, don’t use it, no matter how “famous” or highly recommended it is. You and the site may just not have “good chemistry,” and you won’t go be able to leverage its capabilities. So, don’t waste your time. Move on to one that is easy for you to use.

3. Does the site work properly (e.g., search capability, resume editing, etc.)?

If you search for jobs located in Chicago, Illinois, the job site should show you jobs in the Chicago area, if it has any. Some large employers have jobs open in many locations, so you may get a few jobs in your search results that don’t appear, at first glance, to be specifically in the geography you want. But most of them should fit your search criteria.

If the results don’t match what you have requested, check for hints or help, and read them before you try again. Typically, on a search engine or other search site, your first few searches just help you understand better how to use the search capability so that you can get what you want.

If you still don’t get what you want after 4 or 5 tries, then either the site does not have the jobs you want, or the search function doesn’t work properly (yes, that happens!). So, time to move on.

4. Does the site have the jobs you want – the “right” industry, profession, employer, and location for you?



If you are looking for an electrical engineering job in Florida with a company working on NASA projects, a site for construction jobs in Oregon won't do you much good. The name of the site may give you a clue about its relevance to your job search (e.g., ComputerJobs.com), but you might not really know for sure until you poke around in the site. Try searching for the job you want, and see what you find. The job search capability should enable you to fine tune your search so that the results are appropriate and useful.

If they don't have the jobs you want, move on. Don't waste your time and risk your privacy by posting your resume and hoping some appropriate jobs appear at some later date.

5. Are the jobs “fresh” or old?

Do a search, or browse through the listings if you can. Do the jobs have posting dates associated with them? Have jobs been posted recently? Be a little suspicious if the jobs are undated or if all the jobs were posted “today” unless thousands and thousands of jobs are listed.

Certainly, a job posted last week, last month, or even last quarter, may still be open, and may be just the right job for you. However, in general, you

should see jobs with a wide range of dates, and, depending on the size of the site, several jobs opened each week day.

If posting dates aren't obvious, check the “Employers” section of the site. Frequently, the pricing section will explain how long a job posting will remain active. Job postings are usually purchased for 30 or 60 days, sometimes longer, so that's usually the oldest age of any job posting you may see.

Sometimes small niche sites (e.g. a site for PHP programmers in western Massachusetts) or failing sites have trouble getting enough jobs to post. Then, you may find VERY old jobs posted. You should probably avoid those sites, too, unless that niche is exactly what you are seeking and jobs in the field are scarce or hard to find.

6. Are most of the jobs posted by employers or agencies acting on behalf of employers?

In general, jobs posted directly by an employer are preferable because you will be dealing directly with the people who can hire you.

- Of course, some employers want anonymity for competitive reasons, and other employers don't have the recruiting staff available. So working directly with the employer is not always possible.

If an agency sends your resume to an employer, you may be at a competitive disadvantage in comparison with a direct applicant because of the cost to the employer of going through a recruiter. An applicant provided by an agency will cost the employer more to hire than an applicant who comes to the employer directly, even if the salary is exactly the same for both

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(because of the fee paid to the agency to find the applicant). So, all things being equal, the direct applicant will more likely be hired than the agency applicant.

7. Can you set up one or more “e-mail agents” or “RSS feeds” that will send matching jobs to you when you are not at the site?



E-mail agents and RSS feed functions typically compare your requirements with new employer job postings, and send you the results via e-mail or RSS feed update when a match is found. So, you don't need to revisit the site yourself and re-run your search every day. Your “agents” will do the searching for you, and send you the results via email or RSS update.

You may need to return to the site to get the details about the job and to apply for it through the job site, but the search part of the process is on automatic pilot for you.

8. Can you store more than one version of your resume so that you can customize your resume for specific kinds of jobs?

Many sites offer you the ability to store several different resumes and apply for a job using the version of your resume you have developed for that specific kind of opportunity. This capability can save you time and effort, and it also makes your job search more effective. The days of a one-size-fits-all resume is over.

9. Will you be able to edit your resume once you have posted it?

You shouldn't run into this very often anymore, but check to see if there is an “edit/update” option for you to access your resume. You can always find ways to improve and update your resume, and they should allow you to do it.

10. Will you be able to delete your resume after you have found a job?

You don't want that old resume still available for view. If your new employer finds it, they may be concerned that you are getting ready to leave. If someone else finds it, they will see all of your personal professional information as well as your address and phone number.



Good job sites provide you with the capability to delete your resume and account or to put your resume in an “inactive” mode until you are ready for your next job search.

Remember: MANY employment sites want to have your resume in their database; you should be choosy about which sites you use.

Check out [Protecting Your Privacy and the Cyber-Safe Resume](#) sections for additional information.

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Susan P. Joyce has been editor of Job-Hunt.org since 1998 when her company, NETability, Inc. purchased Job-Hunt.org. Susan has over 30 years of experience in the IT world plus several years of experience working in the Personnel Office at Harvard University and one year as a project manager for salary/compensation survey consulting company.

Susan has been “laid off” twice – the first time by the U.S. Marine Corps at the end of the Vietnam War and the second time in 1994 when her employer, Digital Equipment Corporation, started the massive layoffs that ended with the company (for several years # 2 in the computer industry) disappearing.

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About Job-Hunt

Job-Hunt.org is a free “employment portal” Website which links to over 18,000 employers and job search and career resources. Advice from various job search experts is also provided, from protecting your privacy to using Craigslist, LinkedIn, and Twitter in your job search.

Assisting job seekers since 1995, Job-Hunt has won much recognition for the quality of the content, and our goal is to continue to deserve that recognition.

- *US News & World Report* Top Site for Finding Work
- *Forbes* Best of the Web for Job Hunting
- *PC Magazine* Best of the Internet for Careers