



# SOLAR PLEXUS CONSULTING

## “Trashing Bad Resumes Since 2007”

The Bad Resume is Just the Start...



## The No Filter Guide to Career Strategies That *Work*

Edition: 2



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# Resume: What is File Complexity (And Why Does It Matter?)

Familiar with workday HCM? Understand algorithms and file complexity? **This** is part of why you aren't getting interviews. You're too complicated for the computer, so you'll never make it to the hiring manager.

Stop over-complicating your file and understand the systems you're up against. Many companies are transitioning to human resources management tools to help them\* out - not you. So, if you don't know the game, you won't win the game.

## Top tips:

- Stop being so complicated. The more complex your file is, the less likely the algorithm-based system is going to "digest" it

- Everyone knows about keywords, and I agree, they should be **part** of your strategy. But a ton of keywords with a less-than-aggressive complex file will never cut it

- Know where you're applying and how the company is "digesting" applications. Are they using workday ? Taleo ? BambooHR ? How about USAJobs? (Probably the worst one of all, which is typically required for government jobs). I almost guarantee your job application is going to run through at least one of these systems, or similar. Do you understand how they work? You should.

Great experience cannot be realized to a human if the computer doesn't digest it. Get your technical game up, and you will be in a much better position to actually land an interview.

231 KB

146 KB

47.7 KB

90.99% file complexity decrease

20.8 KB



# Resume: Understand Data Parsing to Get Your Application Through Automated Hiring Systems

So, you're still wondering why you keep getting rejection emails, and you're stumped as to why (and even **more** confused on how to go about course-correcting).

As I continuously advocate, HRM systems are not designed for the applicant. As you apply for jobs, you need to first understand if your application is up against an HRM. If it is, you need to keep this in mind as you go about applying, because every single click and upload will matter.

So, let's unpack data parsing for a minute and understand how that makes a huge difference. Remember, if your application is going through an HRM, you have to think like the computer. This is automated.

Quick upskilling on data parsing. This is a simple, and automated data extraction methodology that is used to dissect your resume and other documents.

So, let's explore a use case of someone who decides to use Microsoft Word's resume template. As you can see, the file size is already at 116 KB before you even build anything into it. How's that helpful? Your resume may "look pretty" from the template, but for an HRM, this is largely already overly complex, and the data parsing is going to get confused.

Simple advice here. The harder it is for the computer to data parse, the higher the chance you won't get through. This is how it works:

- (A) The computer can easily parse the data: application likely moves forward (among other factors)
- (b) The computer cannot easily parse the data, and because it's having a difficult time, it automatically rejects the application

...you weren't even given a shot. Partially due to the data parse complexity issue.

It's a simple fix, and with the right tools and resources, you can best position your resume, and other supporting documents, to be "data parse friendly". Overarching advice here: stop making the computer angry, and you have a higher chance of getting through.

Lean files = higher success rates  
Complexity = Rejection

That simple.

Don't know where to get started, or understand why your file is overly complex? Need to lean out your file, but not sure how? SPC specializes in the technical and digital end of applying, specifically for HRM systems. Stefanie has a file designed in 2007, which has proven results to beat the systems. Please see website for more information on options:

[www.solarplexusconsulting.com](http://www.solarplexusconsulting.com)



Remember what's going on here: this is **automated**



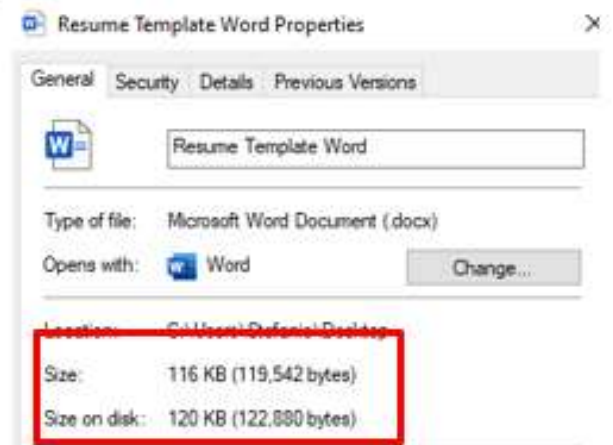
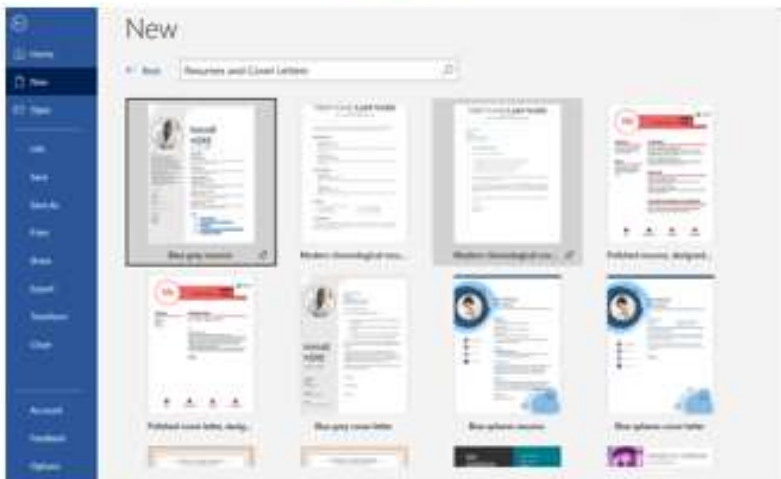
### Application Questions 1 of 2

#### Quick upskilling on **data parsing**

Resume Parsing is a technology that allows us to process resumes by extracting data in an intelligent way. In workday we parse resumes that prospects upload on the Prospect Introduce Yourself page on external career sites. Workday now displays the parsed information on the prospect profile, enabling us to easily identify prospects who meet the organization requirements.

**Use case:** You used Microsoft Word to create a resume template

**Realization:** You're already at **116 KB** before you even build this out. Yikes!





# Resume: Write Your Resume – Once!

How many times have you re-written your resume to tailor it for a job?

How much time have you wasted in doing this? I get it - you want your resume to "be the perfect fit for the role" - but you need to remember the focus: ROI (return on investment).

It will always\* be about ROI. So, stop wasting time.

When trying to get maximum ROI without spinning your wheels, write one quality baseline resume - and leverage it to create tailored resumes in under 5 minutes.

Remember that these roles you're applying for may not even invest 5 minutes on your application. So why spend anything over a comparable amount of time in applying? If you have solid foundational documents to work from, you won't need to re-write or spend hours of edits on each application.

Write it effectively - once and leverage it at scale. **This** is what's going to get you multiple interviews and options that you're looking for.

**Copy and paste – keep it simple**

**Tailored (under 5 minutes)**

**Write it once**



# Resume: Algorithm Based HRM Systems

Do you really know what's going on when you upload your resume into an algorithm based HRM system? If you don't, you're missing a major piece to the puzzle, and this can explain a lot of why you're losing traction.

Let's explore what **really** goes into what happens when you upload your resume into WorkDay (a human resources management tool), which operates just like any other HRM tool (algorithm-based).

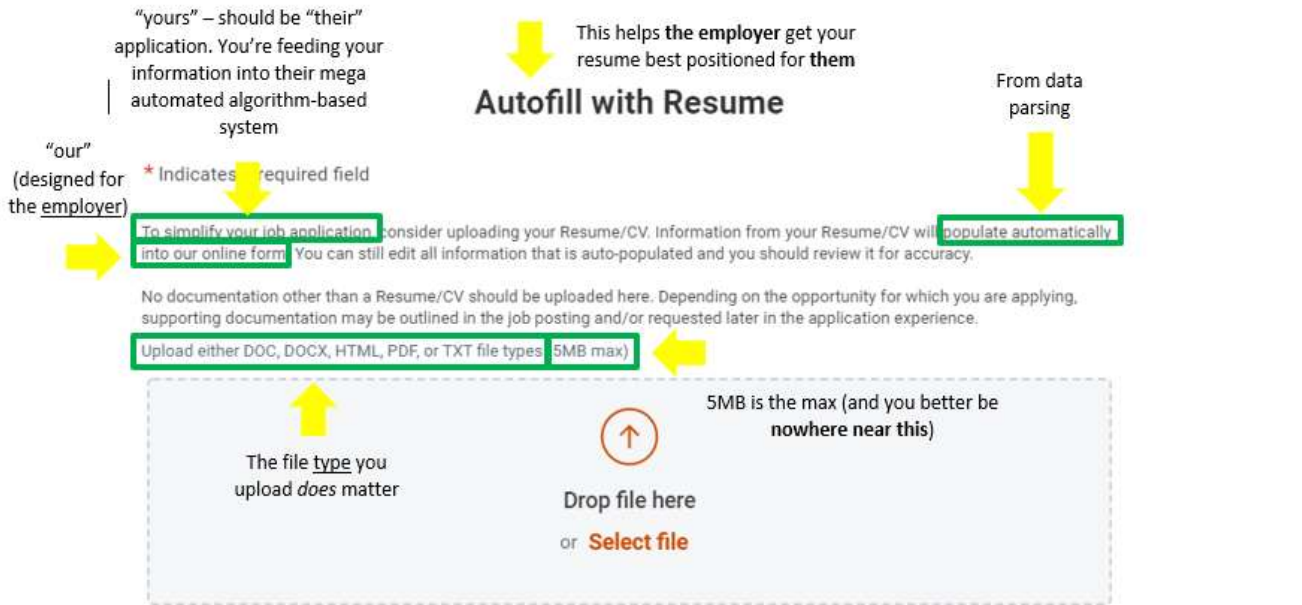
1) Let's remember that this tool is designed for the employer - **not you**. You are doing **them** a favor by uploading this file to their system. Your upload is helping them to start digitally digesting it. So, are you putting your best competitive technical game up?

2) You are given the option to upload any kind of file you want. What you likely don't realize is, the type of file actually **does** matter. Keep uploading whatever you want, uninformed, and you're doing yourself a disservice by not submitting the most competitive file type. It matters.

3) Do you know what data parsing is? If you don't, you're largely behind. This whole exercise is designed around one simple technical advantage: data parsing. Does your resume know how to be competitive for making the data parse part of this to **your** advantage? If not, you have work to do.

4) They're telling you that 5MB is the max file size. What they're **not** telling you is that if your file size is anywhere near this, you're not a competitive candidate. What's your file complexity look like? 5MB? This needs work if you're nearing this file size. The approach should be lean (this ties back to data parsing)

Stop shooting yourself in the foot and putting low-quality, technically weak resumes through these systems. Remember, WorkDay, and other HRM's are **beast** systems not designed for the candidate. Fail to bring the competitive edge and you'll never make it.



See the overall theme here? This is designed for the employer – not you.

Continue

**So this begs the million-dollar question – what resume are YOU uploading?**





# Application Strategy: Get Rejected - the Right Way

Rejection. Who doesn't love it? Especially when it comes to jobs, which is the most stressful kind of rejection.

The unfortunate reality is - this is the name of the game. It's **how** you go about getting rejected that's key. Do you find that a lot of your rejections appear to be the same? Do they all appear automated? That means that you didn't have an aggressive technical aspect to your application (we explored this in another article).

So, what's the deal then? How do you get properly rejected to get where you need? Here's some tips:

- Get in the right headspace. Rejection is part of the process. If you get annoyed every time you get rejected, you're already setting yourself up for mental failure. Expect rejection and it will serve you well in the long run.
- Get rejected the **right** way - not by a computer, but by a human. When computers reject you, it means that a human never had the opportunity to try to reject you. When you get rejected by a human, it means that someone (**someone**) actually had to reject you. There's a difference. Get more rejections from humans so you can open more doors. In the real-life use case shown below, we can see that thoughtful emails were written from someONE, where although rejected, the door appears to still be open for future opportunities. **This** is how you should get rejected. Let them come back to you in the future if needed. Grow your network while you're getting rejected.
- Sometimes hiring managers will respond to you to give you more context around why you weren't selected. So, ask. What's the worst they can do? They already rejected you, so you have nothing to lose. Ask for feedback about what you could have done better during the hiring process. You may end up with some helpful tips for the future.
- If you're consistently getting rejected with the same approach and application materials (mainly, resume), then you should consider the source of why this is happening. Does your resume need help? Are your application materials really competitive? If they're subpar either from a storytelling perspective or technical aspect, you're going to keep getting rejected. If you need to solicit help on any of what you're putting out there - do it. Otherwise, you'll continue to be stuck in a rut.

Remember. Keep doing the same thing, keep getting the same results. Fail faster if what you're doing isn't working.

Rejection isn't fun. But there **is** a way to go about it, and there **are** opportunities that can arise from having put yourself out there **to** get rejected. It's all how you do it.



## How NOT to get rejected (Automated)

Dear

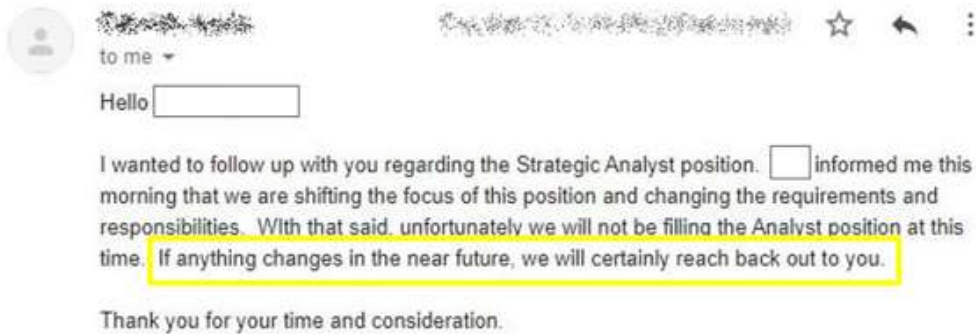
Thank you for your interest in the  position at

At this time, we have decided to move forward with another candidate. We sincerely appreciate you taking the time to apply, and our team will retain your information for future consideration.

Thanks again for your interest in  and best of luck with your job search.



## How TO get rejected (from a human)





# Application Strategy: Leverage Your Network to Remain Effective

How many rejection emails have you gotten? Are you continuing to do the same thing, or have you spent intentional time to reflect on why it isn't working?

Let's take a look at how WorkDay **could** be your friend. I typically write about how HRM's are difficult to get through (and they are). But if you know how to work the system, it could completely work in your favor.

In this article, we explore the return on investment on the power of referrals. We all know that referred applicants get to the top of the list. It's the same methodology with HRM's (again - think algorithmic). If you have an internal referral, in conjunction with a digitally competitive resume, and overall application strategy, this should be quite seamless.

In this real-life scenario, a candidate was referred to a position at this company. As you can easily see, this is an automated email from our friend, WorkDay (noted in red). Where this is to your favor is the section in green. "Your status as a referred candidate will carry with you to any position for which you apply!"

Well, if that's not motivation to start calling people in your network. Don't know anyone at these companies? Here is some opportunity for improvement:


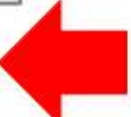
- 1) Grow your network - like, yesterday (and I mean, as soon as possible). Don't wait until you're about to graduate and know maybe 10 solid contacts as you're crossing the graduation stage
- 2) If you have a targeted set of companies that you would like to work for, but you don't know anyone who works there - find them. This is where a consistent and intentional focus on building your network becomes key. This extends far from LinkedIn messaging. I'm talking about a holistic, dedicated networking strategy, that will have contacts and resources available to you when YOU need them. Start now.
- 3) Stop being afraid to contact people. People should get over the fear factor of reaching out. Many people are more than happy to help you - so ask. The worst case is they won't respond or won't be willing. What's worse than that? (that you didn't even try). So, try.
- 4) Don't assume that because there is no perceived immediate value, that there will never be any value. Remember: people know people, and people talk. So just because Bob at Company Party X did not appear to be valuable now, doesn't mean he won't be valuable when you need him. Keep your options open.

Don't wait to grow your network. The immense value of being able to call someone on the drop of a dime for something that you may need can afford you opportunities that may not have been otherwise possible.

Grow your network now, maintain those relationships consistently, and leverage your network when needed. It's well worth the investment.





You've been referred to [redacted] Inbox X

 **HRWorkday**  [@myworkday.com](#)

to me

Dear [redacted]


[redacted] has referred you to an open position at [redacted]

It's great that the process started. Click Manager, Process Management  
 [http://\[redacted\].wd1.myworkdayjobs.com/](http://[redacted].wd1.myworkdayjobs.com/) to review the opportunity and submit your application! Once  
[redacted] received your application, we can move you forward in the recruiting process. 

**If this role isn't a fit, you can search for one that better matches your background and interests. Your status as a referred candidate will carry with you to any position for which you apply!** You can check out all of our current openings at [redacted] [careers.com](#).

Need help? Reach out to [Careers@\[redacted\]](mailto:Careers@[redacted])

Thank you,  
The Referral Team





# Application Strategy: Simply Just Ask for a Job - It Works

Did you know that literally straight-up asking for a job actually works?

I have successfully landed multiple jobs by literally doing just that. I have also been offered jobs just for being different through showcasing skill sets, showing strengths and abilities, and communicating value. This\* is part of having a competitive edge in the job application process.

Are you like everyone else who applied online with a potentially sub-par resume and application? Or were you someone else, with a differentiator who really did something different?

If you have a position or place in mind that you really want to work for – actually try just showing up there. This comes with the expectation that you are:

- Have a polished and professional look, as this is your first impression (this goes without saying)
- Best prepared with a competitive printed resume ready for whomever you hand it off to
- A well-rehearsed and solid elevator pitch
- An engaging story as to why you are the best fit for the role
- An overall pitch that actually sells (I do not mean reading your resume – I actually mean an overall effective pitch)
- An effective Next Steps Strategy to ensure you are well-positioned for what you and the potential employer can expect next to ensure traction. Lack of this step creates no sense of urgency on both parties

All of THIS comes with proper planning. You do not just show up to the employer of your dreams with anything less than subpar. Do the above with proper planning and quality effort, and your in-person unexpected appearance could be that differentiator that actually returns the value you're looking for – steps that lead you to an offer.

Remember – these are shark-infested waters. Competition is fierce, and you are only **one** of the fish in a large pool. Keep being a fish and you'll remain a fish. Think and act like a shark, and you'll survive.



# Application Strategy: Navigating Recruiters

Who here loves dealing with recruiters? I know I do!

Now when I say I love dealing with them – I mean that I love having the opportunity to showcase what I know to navigate them quite effortlessly. Do you have what it takes to deal with these guys?

Remember what recruiters' motivations are (and if you're not aware of them, this is the first thing to consider). This is a job that **they** do, for targets and quotas that **they** have to hit. **You are part of these targets.**

So, consider this. Recruiters reach out to you with this marvelous “opportunity” (specific attention on the quotes there), where you as the candidate are potentially somewhat interested and/or maybe totally interested (based on what's been told to you).

Are you asking the right questions to get the true clarity around the opportunity? Have you effectively communicated with them to ensure they were truly acting in your best interest?

I think of job recruiters as non-fiduciary certified financial planners, in a way. They do their jobs, with their own intentions, but not from the true mentality of actually being your advocate (usually). There could be recruiters out there that have your best interest in mind, but overall, this is their job with their objectives.

## Top tips when dealing with recruiters:

1) Simply don't deal with them! Remember that direct applications are always much more lucrative than engaging a third-party recruiter (this is due to the expense of having the recruiter in the first place). Remember – hard work pays off. Laziness equates to less for you.

2) If you do deal with recruiters: ask the right questions to get the right clarity. They tell you XYZ, but remember, it's what they're NOT telling you. Do your homework and ask.

3) Ask initial upfront questions before you waste your time interviewing. Remember how much hard work interviewing is? Don't want to find out all the blemishes after the fact of having wasted all this time and effort – right?

4) Do your own due diligence on both the opportunity, and the recruiting company/individual (but more so on the actual opportunity). Recruiters in general are all the same, with the same motivation. Really understand what you're getting yourself into with informed information. Remember, a well-educated applicant is a successful applicant.

Bottom line: **you** are your own advocate, and recruiters (like human resources and others in this general realm) are not always advocating for your best interest. Self-advocate for your needs and you will remain a successful (and happy) employee.



## Application Strategy: Recruiter Caution

Did you know that recruiters can (and do) make changes to your resume?

Why use them? Here are some things to consider about recruiters:

- They have their own objective that usually is guided by their own targets/goals (and you are the byproduct)
- They have the ability to, and do, make changes to your resume. In some cases, recruiting companies have a department of resume writers waiting for your resume so they can make changes, often for their clients. You probably worked hard on your resume, and now someone is going to change it? ? The changes could only be formatting, but I have experienced recruiters that change content in order to achieve their objectives. If you know how to write an effectively written resume, you won't need someone else to turn it into something else
- Involving a third party means less negotiating power for you because now you have to account for the recruiter's cut of the deal. Why would you want that? If you know how to effectively negotiate, you won't need a third-party
- Once you start working with a recruiter, you will often be asked if you want to be submitted for other roles. At first thought you may think this is great but realize that these jobs may not be something you even want. Remember your ultimate goal: tell your right story to achieve your\* goal – not someone else's

I will continue to advocate – apply for jobs directly. If you are a candidate who does the below things successfully, you won't need a recruiter:

- An effective resume (content and digitally)
- A thought-out and tactical application strategy
- A differentiated interview experience
- A strategically navigated salary negotiation

Consider this - you are essentially paying a recruiter with a lower total compensation due to involving them, and\* you're paying by letting someone else drive your career direction.

Why not try something like this:

- Get your resume right. Solicit the right help to get a resume that actually returns results and stop applying with something that isn't working
- Get an application strategy that actually makes sense. Stop doing only what you know with the hope something will change (because it won't). Get a better sense of a high-ROI application strategy and invest your energy into that\*
- Stop being like every other typical interviewee. Are you doing and asking all the same things as everyone else? Then you'll continue to be everyone else, and likely, won't have the competitive edge



- Stop thinking negotiating is scary. Did you know that it's an expected course of business to negotiate? If you don't have the courage to have this conversation, let alone know what to ask, this is where you need to re-focus

Bottom line: consider where you're putting your energy. Recruiters may seem like a help, only because they're doing the work for you. But what are they really\* doing for you is what I would challenge you to consider.







# Application Strategy: Work for A Government Agency

Here's a good story. How to get into the U.S. Secret Service.

Sharing my own personal story on how I was able to successfully land an internship, and subsequently, a paid student assistantship with the agency. I did this with an undergrad degree that didn't align to the agency's mission.

So how was this possible? This is where creativity comes into play. So, here's the background. I was an average college kid, pursuing average things, with an average GPA, blending in like the rest of my colleagues.

So, what made me different? How was I successful here? Key points that led me to success:

- 1) Think outside the box. Routine and non-creative methods won't return results. Think creatively
- 2) Leverage resources. I will always advocate for this. Know who to reach out to, and know how to best navigate these leverages timely
- 3) Tell the right story. This ended up being my saving grace, particularly here. Very close to being told "no", I didn't stop until I told the right story. I found a way, and I made it happen
- 4) Have a solid resume. I'll keep saying it - this matters. I'll never forget the feedback I got from the Investigative Assistant who interviewed me who literally said "we chose you because we saw you had an impressive resume" (impressive? or just effectively communicated telling the right story? Remember - I was average just like everyone else)
- 5) Keep at it. Nothing worthwhile will fall in your lap. This took **work** - a lot of work. Look what the result was

I will always be grateful for having had this opportunity. I had about two years at this agency in total - an experience that has opened up endless opportunities for me. I met Former President of the United States, Barack Obama, shook hands with presidential candidate, Mitt Romney, and had other once-in-a-lifetime opportunities.

This didn't happen overnight. This didn't happen because I sat back and said "I'm not sure". This happened because I did it. I got things done, I had the confidence to do it, and I didn't accept "no" when I was told it wasn't possible. This is what top performers do to get where they need. They make it happen.



“We can’t hire you – your degree requirements don’t align”



- College student pursuing engineering major from standard university
- Average GPA
- Typical professional experience for someone in college
- **Applied for USSS with no relevant experience or solid story for justification**



**Keys to Success:**

- Effective story telling
- Strategic timing
- Outside-the-box thinking and approach

- Successfully offered internship despite degree misalignment
- Subsequently hired due to strategic timing
- Granted TS Clearance
- **Worked for the agency for ~2 years as student co-op**



# Application Strategy: Identifying & Navigating ATS Systems

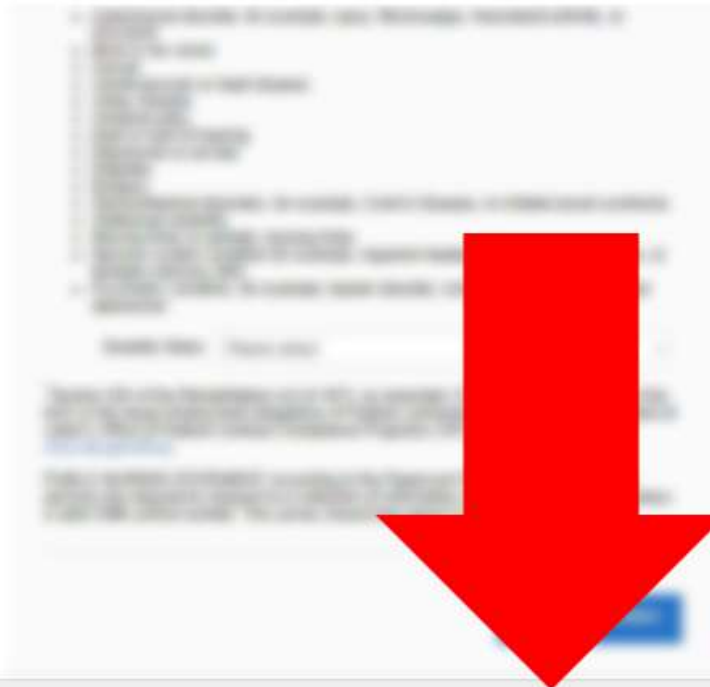
Do you understand the technical aspects behind applications you're submitting?

If you don't, you need to.

Top tips when applying for jobs:

- 1) Understand the system you're applying through, what exactly that means, and how to navigate it
- 2) Leverage resources prior to submitting any application that has any suspected or confirmed use of ATS
- 3) Realize that every click and upload matters. Ensure your files are written with quality and digitally competitive
- 4) Consider the rapid-fire approach. Realize the pros and cons of doing this and how this may or may not positively impact your approach

Applying for jobs is overwhelming, but it's not impossible. Work strategically with a focus on quality and you'll have higher interview traction.



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# Application Strategy: Using the Rapid-Fire Technique to Get A Job

Have you ever tried rapid firing for jobs? Like how you rapid fire on Tinder?

If you haven't, you should consider it. Applying for jobs is a form of marketing, where the larger your "marketing funnel" is, the more options you will give yourself. So similar to how you swipe right to get more matches on Tinder, the more you apply, the more options you'll have. Think scale.

Top tip when considering whether to rapid fire:

1) Large corporations: you run a higher chance of having it work due to a sea of hiring managers who are managing the requisitions. Use that to your advantage

2) Smaller corporations: you run a higher risk that you'll come off desperate since you're applying for close to everything at their company. A dedicated and intentional approach works better here

3) Diversify. If you rapid fire all in one place, it's obvious. Figure out how to best rapid fire at scale to get a variety of options

4) Adopt the "yes" mentality. Not sure if you're going to get an opportunity to interview? Stop thinking so hard. The name of the game is "yes", not "I'm not sure". Just do it.

5) Ensure you're submitting quality application materials. A rapid-fire approach won't have any return on investment if you're throwing out garbage

Bottom line: rapid firing can be effective if you do it right. Consider these recommendations as you apply for jobs and you'll get invited for interviews in no time.





# Interviewing: Interview for 3-Letter Government Agencies

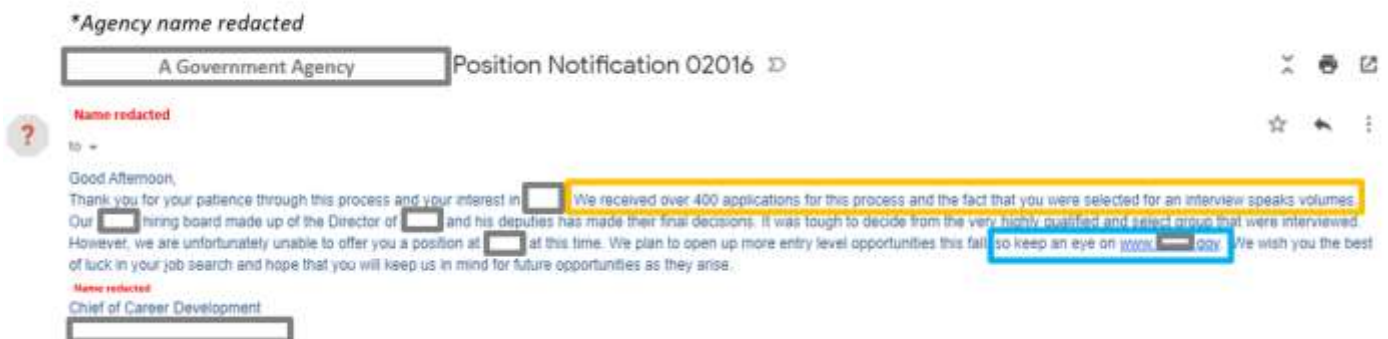
Where have you had the opportunity to interview?

Real-life government jobs use case: This candidate successfully landed an in-person interview for a highly regarded and once-in-a-lifetime government opportunity. Let's explore this one:

- 1) This interview was not obtained through traditional means. Realize that not every government job is going to run through the mastermind of USAJobs. If you can avoid USAJobs, avoid it. It's a large and incredibly competitive algorithmic system that is not designed to your favor. If you have other leverages - utilize them.
- 2) The orange box where they say, "the fact that you were selected for an interview speaks volumes". I'd say so - not everyone gets the chance to even interview at these places, let alone work at them. What competitive edge do you bring to the table to make this happen? It can't be anywhere near sub-par.
- 3) The blue box - see what happened here? This is the direct website to the agency. If you want to work for the government, you need to think a little bit outside-the-box. Be like everyone else, and you'll be behind literally thousands of people. You must remain creative.

Now although this particular email appears to be auto generated, there were written communications from a real human prior to this. What does this mean? You have a better chance when you talk to people, not a computer and a massive algorithm.

Think outside the box. Talk to actual people. Leverage your resources and know the game.





# Interview: Deloitte Interviews

Ever heard the saying "Getting into Deloitte is harder than getting into Harvard University?"

Not so much. Let's explore this real-life use case:

I successfully landed multiple interview opportunities with Deloitte in New York, NY and two interviews in Washington, D.C. I had the commensurate experience to peers at my level. There were no special credentials or circumstances here.

So how were multiple interviews at Deloitte obtained so easily?

Let's look at these e-mails. What happened in both of these scenarios (the blue boxes)? I was invited to complete the application **after** I had been invited to interview. That's odd - doesn't that usually come first?

**Not always.** Remember: think outside-the-box.

## Top tips:

- The rule of formally applying to a job is not a hard-and-fast rule to do as a first step

- Applying for a job via the application system is merely a formality if you go about it this way (backward) - this is your ideal state

- Do proactive and effective things **before** you actually apply. The application is one of the worst parts, partly due to the technical game. There are creative ways to get around the standard apply>try to get an interview>interview>offer timeline

Getting into any Big 4 accounting firm is challenging - but it's not impossible. Remain vigilant, proactive, and creative to get where you need. It's not impossible.





# Negotiation: Effective Negotiation Tips

I love when companies want to negotiate with me. Do they **really** know who they're about to deal with?

Toyota enticed me with a “new car opportunity” based on the recent car chip shortage crisis. Wasn't long before I started listing out my targeted questions and negotiation tools. You better have a **really** good offer around the corner for me to consider.

This poor Toyota representative who is a week into working for this car dealership had the unfortunate experience of having to deal with me - an aggressive negotiator.



I love how this conversation ended - me passing off a business card explaining that this is literally expertise that I specialize in. Good luck guys!

Although I'm not done with her (or the dealership), I was reminded of the key elements necessary in any negotiation. So, whether it's negotiating a job offer, a car, or anything else, there are basic principles you should follow:

- 1) Do your homework. The more prepared you are as a well-informed applicant, the more negotiation power you have to your favor
- 2) **Stop** being afraid to negotiate. The goal of a negotiation is intended to be a collaborative conversation between the applicant and employer. HR expects this! I never understand those who don't even try. Get the confidence and prepare for the conversation because it's going to happen
- 3) Understand that negotiation far extends base salary. If this is all you're considering, you need to realize that this is a **total compensation conversation**. You need to understand what exactly all of that entails and how to leverage it
- 4) Realize that there are other negotiation tricks outside of traditional numbers-crunching techniques. Understand the holistic picture to negotiate what matters to YOU
- 5) If needed, consult with a trusted financial advisor who has your best interest in mind. This person at a minimum should be a fiduciary (this is **non**-negotiable).
- 6) If you solicit help from a trusted career advisor, understand their reputation in the business and gain the comfort you need engaging them as a trusted advisor

Last year I proudly signed on the dotted line for my Toyota Corolla Hybrid – a brand new car I negotiated on a 0% loan with all warranties and extra perks and benefits I squeezed out at year-end. An all-day event of negotiating – I happily am still driving this beauty. Only with a competitive counter trade-in will Toyota stand a chance. Special thanks to Ramit Sethi for game-changing financial advice from his New York Best Seller *I Will Teach You to Be Rich*.

You too can be a competitive negotiator. With confidence and a solid effort towards preparation and dedicated research, negotiation is nothing to be afraid of, which has strong power to accomplish your financial and personal goals.



# Negotiation: Using an HSA Account as a Negotiation Piece & Investment Tool

Do you have HSA as part of your negotiation conversation?

If you don't, you're losing out on free money in your total compensation package (notice how I said "total compensation", not "salary negotiation"). Special shout out to Ramit Sethi, once again, for sound and strategic financial advice. Why wouldn't you want free money? The investment potential with HSA is huge. If you haven't read Ramit's book *I Will Teach You To Be Rich* - at least reference his chapter on HSA's before you negotiate. I found it very insightful and wasn't aware of how powerful these accounts can be.

I won't steal his thunder on HSA's, but some key tips to be a competitive negotiator:

- 1) Ask and you shall receive (seriously. If you don't ask for it, they won't consider giving it to you)
- 2) Do you have a comprehensive list of all the perks and benefits that you should ask during negotiation? Do you understand all of them?
- 3) Did you comprehensively address these perks and benefits with the hiring manager? Were you ready to counter if the response wasn't to your liking?
- 4) Did you have all the relevant information prior to going into your conversation? Do you fully understand the mechanics of these negotiation items?

Can you speak to all of this confidently?

If any of the above answers was "no", or if overall you are not feeling confident to speak to this, it's recommended to consider the importance of researching and having done homework ahead of time.

Remember: a less informed and less educated candidate = less results for you. Come in ready with the right information, targeted questions, and full understanding, and you'll walk out confidently with a total compensation package better than what was offered.

And please - don't ever just accept their offer. That's what they're banking on.







# Strategy: Every Experience is an Opportunity

Who's ever considered a new job out of (maybe) desperation due to how unhappy you are at your current job?

I know I surely have, and I know I'm not alone.

It breaks my heart to see people having hesitation when they're about to make a move, not knowing what's worse - where they're at, or where they're going. They say that "the grass isn't always greener", and oftentimes it's scary to navigate which is better: what you currently do (which you hate), or where you're going (and if that's any better).



Top tips I recommend during this uncertainty one may experience while transitioning employment:

- 1) Trust your gut - if it doesn't feel right after fully and responsibly negotiating, listen to that. The grass isn't always greener
- 2) If you're truly desperate to get out of your current situation, understand what your long-term options are
- 3) Only make the move if it's right - for **you**. Yea, recruiters need "answers by X date", but remember - your calendar is just as important as theirs (I'll even say, more important)
- 4) Always see it as an opportunity. If you don't see the move as being anything that will benefit you, don't consider it. Only make the move if there are foreseeable tangible skills and experiences that can be gained from making the move
- 5) Engage the help of a trusted advisor (an advocate) to have in your corner. Changing positions and companies can be scary, so know who you can reach out to in order to chat through what's ultimately best - for you.

Bottom line: Hiring managers, human resources, and recruiters are **not** your advocates. You are (and potentially with the help of someone advocating for you). Always do what's best for you, in your timing, for your needs.



# Strategy: Utilize Time Wisely to Return ROI

How extensively do you read job descriptions? I hope you're not reading every word because it's losing you traction.

Example shown here is a typical long requisition from a big 4 firm where there's a lot to read and consider. As I continue to advocate, it's about three things:

- 1) Quality
- 2) ROI
- 3) Scale

So, as you're going about your job search, is there a lot of value gained from reading every single word of every job description? Not in my opinion.

Is there value in questioning whether or not you are the perfect fit and/or have a shot? Not in my opinion.

Stop thinking so hard. Top tips to consider when reading these (sometimes very long) job descriptions that are contributing to your job search fatigue:

1) Read the req at a 50,000-foot view. Are you generally interested, and does it appear to fit your requirements - at a high level? Give it a shot. Remember the name of the game is "yes", not "I'm not sure" Get it done.

2) Apply with quality baseline documents. I will always advocate for this. Applying on a rapid-fire approach won't mean anything if you're throwing out garbage. Quality first.

3) Diversify. We all know the rule of "don't put your eggs in one basket". Same rules apply here.

4) Automate as much of this process as you can. Identify where those automations exist and leverage it.

5) Have fun! The process is exhausting and you're going to get rejected (this is expected). Don't get down in the dumps when it happens - Embrace it!

Leverage these tools on your search and you'll start seeing results in no time.

**Deloitte.**

**Position Summary**  
**Organization Design Manager**

Are you passionate about helping clients solve complex challenges and supporting them through critical transformations? As a member of our Organization Transformation (OT) practice, you will deliver organization strategy, organization design, and workforce transition enablement for industry leading clients.

Would you like to work for an organization committed to your professional development and personal success? Deloitte offers an award winning culture that supports our employees' development of their personal brand through learning opportunities, professional experiences, inclusion, collaboration and personal well-being.

**Work you'll do**

As an Organization Design Manager, you will use a combination of our global methodology and advanced analytical tools to design and deliver organization strategy solutions to our clients.

Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

Develop and implement organization strategies that support improved client future-state organizational design and service delivery. Manage the process for preparing organization design alternatives, testing them against design criteria, and aligning leadership groups around design selection and implementation. Apply analytic and visualization tools to assess the impact of varying design and decision solutions. Manage the process of identifying, assigning, and implementing decision making authority and responsibility to both individuals (decision rights) and groups (governance). Prepare workforce transition plans and programs, including strategies to transition talent at all levels. Design jobs and roles, create competency models and career paths to aid in the selection and transition of employees. Serve as a trusted advisor to clients through the organization design process. Lead and contribute to practice development initiatives including culture building, internal community involvement, eminence, recruiting, whitepapers, etc. Drive business development efforts, including Statements of Work (SOW), proposal development, client presentations, etc. Act in a mentoring capacity to support the career development of OT colleagues.

**The team/Organization Transformation**

The Organization Transformation practice is about transforming the organization (and the benefits providers that serve them) to support its business strategy. This involves helping our clients move from where they are today to where they need to be in the future. It could include changing the organization's culture, modernizing specific functions, re-designing the organization structure, and will require a combination of change management actions to execute the transformation. To enable our success, it will be critical to use data and insights to inform better ways of working together.

**Qualifications**

**Required:**

- Minimum six (6) years of relevant experience in a consulting or industry role, with at least one (1) year of relevant experience in an external consulting role
- Minimum four (4) years of experience leading multiple project teams simultaneously on relevant engagements
- Proven experience in business development and/or proposal development in support of related specialty areas

**Preferred:**

- Bachelors' degree
- Ability to travel up to 50% (While up to 50% travel is a requirement of the role, due to COVID-19, non-essential travel has been suspended until further notice)
- Must be legally authorized to work in the United States without the need for employer sponsorship, now or at any time in the future.



# Strategy: Tips on How to Work More Effectively

“I don’t have time to go to the gym” (and I struggle with keeping up a healthy lifestyle)

“I work 100 hours a week and my personal life is taking a hit as a result” (and I struggle with enjoying my life due to high work demands)

“I don’t have time to cook so I eat out and/or make poor diet choices” ...Do you see a consistent theme here? I’ll give you a hint: it’s your most valuable resource, that you don’t even realize you’re wasting. Every. Single. Day.

If any of the above describes you, this is for you:

1) Adopt the NRN mentality (NRN: “no response needed”). “Inbox 0” is impossible, and there shouldn’t be any expectation around this. Get onboard with knowing that not every communication is deserving of a response.

2) Boundaries. This is a big one, guys. 3-4 hours of sleep per night? Where are your priorities? Communicate your personal and professional boundaries and where you stand with this.

3) Prioritize - this includes you, and the highest most prioritized items that matter - today. Not for eternity. What matters, the most, today? What are those 5 things?

4) Reduce the noise. Most of why people are “busy” is because they simply can’t prioritize or get things done effectively. You claim you’re busy, yet I see your contributions on Instagram, Facebook, and other non-value-added tasks (and then you claim you couldn’t “get anywhere with your job search”?) I don’t buy it.

5) Work Effectively. So many people complain about “working 15 hours a day”. Did you really need to do that? Re-evaluate why you’re spending 8 hours a day in meetings and consider why so much of your time is wasted. I guarantee a lot of that has to do with ineffective ways of working. (Specifically consider cross-collaboration, team visibility, autonomous execution, healthy teams, leveraging relevant technical tools, to name a few).

A lot of corporations fail at working effectively as a whole. You as an individual don’t need to lower yourself to these ineffective standards.



# Strategy: Capitalize on Return on Investment (ROI) to Get Results

Let's talk about return on investment (ROI) for a minute. This is a basic concept, and one that largely applies to the job search process, among other areas of life.

You don't invest your time or effort into things or people who don't provide you with any level of value or returned prioritization - right? You prioritize and choose your daily activities according to what you believe is going to provide you the most value - right?

Remember that **time is money** - and if you're on unemployment, your time is even more critical. You don't have time to waste. I'll even say time is **more** valuable than money, because money can be regained, whereas time cannot. Cherish your time and prioritize it effectively.

So, stop wasting it.

Spending exorbitant amounts of time on perfecting your resume, writing a cover letter that no one will read, or endless hours of interview preparation that could have easily been a one-hour prep session that is much more effective are all things you need to be paying attention to.

Also being totally overwhelmed with "your list" is something else you need to get straight. Remember, all of it doesn't matter - right now. Limit your WIP (work in progress) to get things done. What matters most to you, right **now** - what needs attention - **today**?

Prioritize. Not everything needs to get done today. Only the highest prioritized things should. These are the things that will return the most value. The challenge then remains: do you know what that is?

Intentionally invest your time. Prioritize effectively. Utilize your judgement to re-prioritize when needed. And trust the process.

It's that simple.

What do you believe are your highest priorities to ensure you are most effective? How can you start, today, to effectively dedicate your time intentionally, to return the most value for time invested?

Here's your challenge: Make a list of the top 5 things. What are they? (Hint: if you're in the job market, this better be one of your items).



# Academic: Effectively Applying for Law School

Who's applying to law school or business school this upcoming semester?

If you haven't already started getting your application materials together - now is the time. Quality applications take time, so don't wait until the last minute. Ensure you're soliciting timely feedback from mentors to get as much feedback as you can on all your application materials. You should also have a solid overall strategy to ensure you're best positioned to have multiple options.

## Top tips:

- 1) Start with a clearly defined application strategy. Have it outlined to know exactly what needs to be done, when, with any relevant details
- 2) Have a quality resume written that showcases your most notable accomplishments, in an impactful way
- 2) Have a quality personal statement that compliments your law-school/business school tailored resume. This should "color in" additional relevant context that your resume does not provide. It should also tell an overall compelling story as to why you, specifically, are a good fit for their program, and how you will be a valuable contributor to the institution
- 3) Quality letters of recommendation (LOR) from well-respected professionals. Realize that your recommenders may request for you to draft the letters - be ready for that. Identify leverages and utilize them accordingly
- 4) Send effective emails to get what you need for LOR's and any other supporting documentation. Ensure you do this timely to get back quality documents within your timeframe outlined in your Application Strategy

All of the above takes intentional and dedicated **time**. A competitive law school or business school applicant will have:


- Solicited help when needed if any of the above could not be done with confidence
- Proactively reached out for mentoring and feedback early. Be receptive to ongoing refinement and feedback throughout the process
- Submitted all quality documents timely to all schools of interest. Used "cast the net wide" approach to ensure you position yourself well to have multiple options

Applying to top tier universities can be a lot of work. With a well-thought-out strategy, quality documents, and an overall compelling story, you hold a strong chance of being considered for the university of your dreams




# Quality strategy







*Quality* resume written that showcases why **you** are a good fit for law school.



*Quality* personal statement that compliments your law-school tailored resume. This should “color in” additional relevant context



*Quality* letters of recommendation from *well-respected professionals* (that **you** may draft). Identify leverages and utilize them.



Sending *effective* emails to get what you need for LOR's and any other supporting documentation.



**All of this needs to tell a consistent, compelling, and competitive *story***



Have a topic you would like Stefanie to write about? Email your topics for consideration for the next issue: [Stefanie@solarplexusconsulting.com](mailto:Stefanie@solarplexusconsulting.com)