How to Survive Job Online Application Procedures with "Wow" Reviews

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for:
2012 Biennial Music Educators National Conference
with Special Focus on
Research in Music Education and Music Teacher Education

March 28–31, 2012
St. Louis, Missouri

Presentation online at:
http://fredkersten.com/Abstract.htm

Abstract

This presentation examines current online application procedures for public school employment. Suggestions are made for portfolio development and inclusion of support documents to provide a favorable impression on potential employers.

Purpose of Study

*What Supervisors of Music want as they observe your online application materials. This survey was conducted utilizing the "Best Communities for Music Education list" developed through the NAMM foundation that has been compiled each year. I developed my 13-item questionnaire online through SurveyShare.com and sent individuals e-mails on to forty different school district music administrators/supervisors and teachers randomly identified (selected from different states). I received a total of twenty-one s responses (52%). My study was qualitative in nature with the objective to obtain a perspective of what qualities were expected by applicants, and what procedures were utilized in selecting successful final candidates for the advertised position. I tried to identify online procedures of candidates that were positive/negative and also to consider procedures of districts regarding sensitive data that was required which could be interpreted as possibility for identity theft. The interpretation of this study is left to the reader to develop of how this data may/may not be pertinent to direction of his/her own specific application.

Online Job Application Site Data Submission Procedures

*Online application procedures in many states allow for submission of application materials and an application file developed that is universal and can then be accessed by any district that the applicant wishes to apply to should a position be available within that district. The two states illustrate these features as the applicant can upload basic academic files to include: résumé, cover letter (individualized) letters of reference, transcripts (unofficial) certificates and additional support documents.

　　　a. The New York OLAS (On Line Application System) allows placement of a résumé, letter of application and application information which can be viewed by administrators in the New York area. Teachers can immediately view available positions and quickly apply if they desire.

　　　b. TeachGeorgia.org is the official teacher recruitment web site for Georgia's public schools. This organization is a collaborative partnership between the Georgia Professional Standards Commission and local public school systems. Applicants can utilize this site free to locate available positions. Applicants can place materials and information on the site for access by potential employers. Administrators can access the candidate's materials through this secure site, and quickly view those who are interested in continuing an application for an available position. This saves hours of filling out applications by applicants and expands visibility to all

districts in the state.

VITAL CONSIDERATIONS FROM STUDENT TEACHING EXPERIENCE

*What are the strongest things that your student teacher proctor teachers and your off-campus supervisor saw in your teaching?
*What do they feel were your main strengths in communicating with students?
*What type of "in front of group strengths" do you provide and are recognized?
*What do your parents, friends, colleagues and mentors mention as your personal strengths/ weaknesses? Ask, them to document this (in a positive manner).
*Try through some type of written scrutiny to self-assess your strengths and weakness and then have a personal conversation with either a proctor teacher, your advisor.or your relatives to discuss these.?

The Application Process

*Contact process for requesting a letter of recommendation from professor, supervisor, principal or proctor teacher:
a. Remind them of who you are.
b. Indicate some of the things that they might include in the letter
c. If the letter is to be sent confidentially to a specific person give them the address and due date.
d. Indicate when you will follow up on them to see if the letter has been sent on.
e. In some cases, a "To Whom It May Concern letter can be written for your placement file and sent on specifically to a placement office. Or, a TWIMC letter may be sent to you for the portfolio that you are developing to send on.
f. Be sure to check with the individual before you indicate his/her name as a reference and get a "hearty" indication of support before you use the person's name.

Transcript Modification with Blackout Techniques.

*If you are requested to provide nonofficial transcripts upfront and you are squeamish about
   including your social security number or date of birth you can blackout this information by
   using photo software and masking the information for view

Three Important Aspects To Continuously Consider As You Apply

*Brevity of application.
*Focus to the specific job situation.
*Research the music department online to learn about aspects of the district program and what you might bring to that organization.

Your Online Identity

What do you look like online?? Check what you look like to a potential employer and you're your positives and negatives. A good developed e-Portfolio will be an asset. If you develop one make sure you include the URL on your Résumé and cover letter.

<u>Identity Theft through Job Application Procedures</u>

Be aware of fraudsters who e-mail you requesting confidential information for potential jobs. Sometimes this can be specifically oriented to educational institutions if you have been applying to job lists that deal with education positions and your name has been included on a job-listing site. _

<u>Development Resources For Résumé and Cover Letter</u>

<u>Résumé</u>
*Word 2010 allows for download of résumé templates at http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/ templates/basic-résumé-template-TC102716871.aspx

<u>Cover Letter</u>
*Cover Letter Info --You have 20-30 seconds to secure an interview. This is the average time it takes for your letter and résumé to make an impression. Keep your cover letter simple, forget the fancy stuff, and be positive. Emphasize your accomplishments and achievements that relate to the specific aspects of the job description. Try to relate your background and experience to the actual needs of the district by viewing their website and developing an overview of their music department.

<u>Follow-up on Job Application</u>

*Be careful of excessive telephone calls. If there are 30 applications for a position that means that many calls if everyone follows up.

*If you have been interviewed you can contact the district to find out in a discrete manner what the time line is for appointment.

*If you have been offered another position and accepted this, notify the districts that have interviewed you so that you are eliminated from the search. Your courtesy will be noted and there is always a possibility that you will apply to that district again and you may be offered a position there in the future.

<u>What Is An Online Application e-Portfolio?</u>

*A dedicated web page providing audio, video, and pictorial job application support. Application e-Portfolios are becoming of value as online application procedures are currently

increasing rapidly.

*By simply providing a web address for the e-Portfolio website when applying online, music applicants, using online systems, and/or applying in a traditional manner, can provide potential employers with a unique online multimedia e-Portfolio, which will provide immediate visual/ aural reinforcement of their musical and educational qualities. A potential employer can quickly copy the e-Portfolio web address--paste, click, and view.

*Visualization is immediate and not just an interpretation of many lines of type! Pictures, short musical examples, résumé, teaching philosophy statement, and indictors of musical and educational achievement are available for instantaneous scrutiny.

*Cost is minimal: the applicant can demonstrate to a potential employer facility with A/V information organization in addition to applicable knowledge of technology.

*Many college music programs include online e-Portfolio development within the music curriculum. The University of Florida presently requires each music education major to develop a web-based music-teaching portfolio as part of the graduation requirements…see http:// portfolios.music.ufl.edu/ for specifics.

The Application e-Portfolio and Online Application

 *Colleges and public school districts are increasingly implementing paperless online employment application procedures.   Including the e-Portfolio address within these procedures is essential. As an example of online possibilities documents might be placed online at such sites.   This saves hours of filling out applications by applicants and expands visibility to all districts in the state.

*HTML development skill--web page editing expertise, learned through creation of the e-Portfolio, is a very important tool to acquire and a skill to illustrate. Many school districts now have sites where teachers place online homework assignments, and classes develop their own web pages with assistance from their instructors.

*Public school and college music teachers with HTML expertise will find that developing web sites is very valuable for communicating with students, colleagues, and parents regarding the music program. These sites can also be utilized for placing teaching resources or guides, on line for perusal by students, or, as a suggested list of sites for conducting research.

*An employer immediately perceives a potential candidate, with technology abilities, to be able to function within a technology-oriented district thus placing the applicant at a higher level on the list of candidates should technical knowledge be a desired quality.

References and Resources

*Word 2010 allows for download of résumé templates at http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/ templates/basic-résumé-template-TC102716871.aspx .jpg made of this page

About.com provides many examples of template letters of application
http://jobsearch.about.com/gi/o.htm?zi=1/
XJ&zTi=1&sdn=jobsearch&cdn=careers&tm=242&gps=144_492_1233_563&f=00&tt=13&bt=
1&bts=1&st=11&zu=http%3A//office.microsoft.com/en-us/templates/CT101467921033.aspx
*Check out and develop a letter of request for a reference from your professors.. (format
included) http://jobsearch.about.com/od/referenceletters/a/reference-request-email.htm
*Check your word software under file and new for résumé and coverletter templates.

Letter of Application
*GREAT ideas for a cover letter.
http://www.msubillings.edu/careers/PDF/Powerful%20Cover%20Letter%20brochure
%209.09.pdf   pdf file has been saved in presentation file
        Suggestions as you develop your Résumé and Letter of Application
        *brevity,
        *focus to the specific job situation,
        *personal image spotlighting (check out the music department online for aspects of the
district program and what you might bring to that organization)
*Jobs & Careers Search Engine – MSN Careers CareerBuilder—Good examples of Résumés
http://msn.careerbuilder.com/MSN/Category.aspx?categoryid=CL&siteid=cbmsn1009Rhp

*How to Follow up on a job application http://money.usnews.com/money/blogs/outside-voices-
careers/2012/01/23/how-to-follow-up-on-your-job-application   Also: http://money.usnews.com/
money/blogs/outside-voices-careers/2010/12/27/how-to-follow-up-after-applying-for-a-job
Good ADVICE

*Jobs INDEED –good site for current positions. http://www.indeed.com/jobs?q=music
+education&l=New+York

*Site you can access if you desire to develop an e-Portfolio http://www.weebly.com/

*Word 2010 allows for download of templates at http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/templates/basic-
résumé-template-TC102716871.aspx

*Request a professor recommendation suggestions: http://jobsearch.about.com/gi/o.htm?zi=1/
XJ&zTi=1&sdn=jobsearch&cdn=careers&tm=242&gps=144_492_1233_563&f=00&tt=13&bt=1&bts=1&st=11&z
u=http%3A//office.microsoft.com/en-us/templates/CT101467921033.aspx

*Request reference letter from professor format: http://jobsearch.about.com/od/referenceletters/a/
reference-request-email.htm

*Microsoft résumé and cover letter templates.
http://jobsearch.about.com/od/coverlettersamples/qt/microtemplateco.htm

*Good information about developing an e-Portfolio. About. Com MSN Careers - Stand Out With an E-portfolio - Career Advice Article http://msn.careerbuilder.com/Article/MSN-1486-Cover-Letters-Résumés-Stand-Out-With-an-E-portfolio/

*New York State Department Teacher Certification: Information. http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/teach/login.html

*Blogger: Create your free Blog—Free site to create a teaching blog. Good templates
Jobs & Careers Search Engine – MSN Careers http://msn.careerbuilder.com/msn/default.aspx
CareerBuilder—Good examples of Résumés Made several .pdf examples

*1 in 5 job seekers latest job social networks - Bing http://www.bing.com/search?q=1+in+5+job+seekers+latest+job+social+networks&FORM=msnpop

*Job candidates get tripped up by Facebook - Business - School Inc. - msnbc.com   http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/20202935/ns/business-school_inc_/t/job-candidates-getting-tripped-facebook/#.TuIn7pghtts Good Source of information as to be careful for reputation on Facebook.

*CareerBuilder.com - CareerBuilder Job Search Good Job Site

*Facebook Apps for Job Searching - Job Search Facebook Applications
Teaching Jobs | Simply Hired

*The INTASC Standards: Helpful source of information about these standards that are utilized by many colleges and states in developing a set of criteria for evaluating teacher abilities and applications. http://www.wresa.org/Pbl/The INTASC Standards overheads.htm

*CCSSO - The Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) http://ccsso.org/resources/programs/interstate_teacher_assessment_consortium_(intasc).html INTASC standards site.

*UF Music Education E-Portfolios http://portfolios.music.ufl.edu/ Great examples of how e-Portfolios can be developed and outlines of headings for consideration as a potential candidate develops these.

'Best Communities for Music Education' in U.S. | NAMM.org http://www.namm.org/news/press-releases/nationwide-survey-finds-best-communities-music-edu

*Identity Theft or Job Application? - The Job Doc Blog - Boston.com
Good advice on how to handle confidential personal information http://www.boston.com/jobs/news/jobdoc/2010/08/identity_theft_or_job_applicat.html Important considerations on job theft situations.

*Identity Thieves Target Job Seekers - BusinessWeek   http://www.boston.com/jobs/news/jobdoc/2010/08/identity_theft_or_job_applicat.html Good source on security and should you submit private information and the responsibility of the employer to protect your information

*Online job listing an ID theft scam - Technology & science - Tech and gadgets - msnbc.com http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/3078533/ns/technology_and_science-tech_and_gadgets/t/online-job-listing-id-theft-scam/#.TuLLV5ghtts Job scam situations that can occur.

*GREAT VIDEO--Identity theft and job applications - YouTube   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cFhrWWSBD5Y

*Good Video on ID Theft. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CRsxUTtwB-4&feature=related Identity Theft: Personal Information (Preventing Identity Theft)   This is a good video to view. http://www.videojug.com/interview/identity-theft-personal-information#when-is-it-safe-to-give-out-my-social-security-number

*TEEN VIDEO-- 5 Ways Teens Are Compromising Their Identities Online - http://www.metacafe.com/watch/676063/top_5_ways_teens_are_compromising_their_identities_online/

*Easy-CV.com | my online résumé http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cFhrWWSBD5Y Place your résumé on line

*Jobfox. Voted The Best of the Job Sites! http://www.schoolspring.com/find/music-teacher-jobs/

*Smart People Marketing - Employment, Interacting & Marketing http://smartjobs.ning.com/ Site for job search

*Find music teacher jobs at SchoolSpring.com! http://www.schoolspring.com/find/music-teacher-jobs/ Job site possibilities.

*Music Teacher Jobs | Simply Hired Great site for researching music positions! http://www.simplyhired.com/a/jobs/list/q-music+teacher
Weebly - Create a free website and a free blog http://www.weebly.com/?footer

*Career Services - Application Process for Teachers http://www.msubillings.edu/careers/AppProcessTeachers.htm

*Developing a Cover letter—some good ideas http://www.msubillings.edu/careers/PDF/Powerful Cover Letter brochure 9.09.pdf http://www.msubillings.edu/careers/PDF/Powerful Cover Letter brochure 9.09.pdf   Good information on developing a cover letter.
How to follow up on an application and job interview. Very Valuable information.

http://www.waunakee.k12.wi.us/teacher_vacancies.cfm
http://www.waunakee.k12.wi.us/teacher_vacancies.cfm

*Tech the Halls! What Not to place on facebook that can come back to haunt you. http://
techthehalls.msn.com/holiday-tech-tips/5-ways-not-to-ruin-your-life-on-
facebook.aspx#fbid=qo09juUMVav

*The Next Big Thing in Job Hunting: Video Résumés - Employment Spot http://
www.employmentspot.com/employment-articles/the-next-big-thing-in-job-hunting-video-
résumés/

*Redact Confidential InformationHuman Resources - Normandale Community College
 https://www.privacyrights.org/fs/fs25-JobSeekerPriv.htm

*Privacy Tips for Online Job Seekers | Privacy Rights Clearinghouse https://
www.privacyrights.org/fs/fs25-JobSeekerPriv.htm Great site with information for job seekers.

<div align="center">Typical Responses to Questions in Survey</div>

Question 1: What is the most important suggestion you would give to a music education applicant to make the online application so attractive you would say "WOW" I will hire you!

*To Make their application relevant and specific to the job situation

*There is no one thing. There is a set of necessary skills, among them would be getting and keeping the students attention and being an excellent musician.

*Show me your experience with students

*Outstanding examples of real teaching experience during student teaching segment of their career

*Passion for excellence either thru work accomplishments or through performing arts activities

*provide a specific resume an portfolio that is oriented towards our district and shows abilities that are specific to the duties we are looking for

*Outstanding Musician with certification and experience related to the job description

*Know the district you are applying to. Just do not apply for any and all jobs if you have no interest in the position.

*I am a music teacher who serves on a music search committee. I look for a person who has significant success as a teacher of music with prior experience. I want to see online applications that illustrate the applicants

background in a specific manner to illustrate what he/she has done teaching music. Clear clean illustrations of what the person would be able to do in our district.

*A strong online presence through YouTube or an e-Portfolio. We can share this information quickly with our committee.

*Follow the directions exactly. If the information is incomplete the application may be immediately rejected.

*illustrate your strengths as a demonstrated teacher, whether you are a beginner or experienced

*Answer each question with the specifics requested. Illustrate how you can help the district with examples of your prior experience and past teaching ability (if you are experienced). If you are a new teacher illustrate your experiences in college and provide a philosophy document that shows thinking about how you can improve the musical abilities of the students you will teach.

*As you develop your application, develop a mock-up of the information required and save this as a separate document. Scrutinize and correct this document for grammar, spelling, and perhaps have someone else look at it for its potential effect. You can also save this for potential thoughts that might be applied to another application.

*Strong videos on YouTube of performances that illustrate musicianship. A video of conducting would be highly valuable. A teaching or communicating type video also would be useful

*Technology skills and expertise as exemplified by quality e-Portfolio, YouTube or other formats. We are looking for technology background as our students are deep in this area and will respect teachers who can meet their needs and relate to them

*Follow the procedures and provide exactly what we wish. Thought out responses illustrating your strengths in the classroom whether a new teacher or veteran are important.

*Fill in the required information with care so there are no typos and missed spaces. Your information is inspected to see the type of responses you provide and it is your first contact with the screening committee.

*Files sent on that are not too large and open up correctly. Include information that supports what you are doing now and why you wish this position

*Shared information that could not be included within the questions of the survey
Some of my answers above are dictated by my district policies. In a former district, I pursued candidates if they looked dynamic from the cover letter. In my current district, I don't see the application unless they pass all HR's hurdles first.

*I would emphasize the importance of the evaluations of the teachers that the persons the person if a recent graduate taught with. I feel that in many cases these individuals not only shape the person's teaching direction initially but can provide a very realistic evaluation of the social communications between the students that they are working with.

*We are a very conservative district and screen very carefully. Your topic is important and you might narrow it down to either all applicants or those who are recently graduated

*You did not mention certification. I would assume from the direction of this study that you are looking to scrutinize only the online application aspects. In truth we look very specifically for certification and that would be a critical quality that must be satisfied before the applicant is considered further. We have so many applicants in this district and it is a buyer's market when we start to scan basic qualities.

It is great to be able to see a candidate as a performer and also hopefully with an ensemble. If the e-Portfolio gives information about teaching abilities (with support from colleagues, peers and supervisors) it becomes very valuable and helpful in the initial screening process

*Reference contact is important as it gives a good idea of character, integrity, and teaching potential and we call numerous individuals and spend at length time in verifying the applicants credentials. With the direction towards recent problems that have occurred in the schools we look very closely as to how the applicant handles our application procedures. We also do extensive checks online to see and note posts that the applicant may have included online. We have excluded individuals in the past because of questionable posts and positions that have been mentioned through technology.

*Question 3: What are the MOST CRITICAL qualities you look for as you screen online application materials?

Specific to the Job situation, Strong student teaching experience with quality references from proctor teachers

1. Desire to work with students. 2. Desire to focus on music fundamentals
significant references from individual who have seen the person teach. Stability and continuity of growth through undergraduate study

*Professional communication, applicant match to posted job requirements

*demonstrated interest in teaching not just music orientation. Academic stability throughout the trascript that is presented to our committee

*pertinent experience, streamlined resume/cover letter addressing the qualifications of the position

*A candidate with interest in children as illustrated by prior work with children. Summer camp, scouts or other child-oriented service participation.

*Interest in providing quality experiences for the age of children the candidate is hired to teach. Varied musical experiences that will allow a well-rounded musician to be able to function within the district with a number of groups of individuals. Examples of working the music activities in with other aspects of the curriculum.

*Question 4: Online application mistakes and turnoffs.

*Poor spelling, poor organization overkill, not meeting the requirements of the application outline

*Grammatical and typographical errors, incomplete documents

*Overkill with all performance details and information that has no bearing to our position. A poorly written letter with extensive personal information that has no relevance to the position.

*No specifics for the position applied to. Poor spelling, grammar, information that has no bearing to the position the applicant is applying for.