


Getting a Job Through Employment Agencies

Job Hunting - A Frustrating Journey



I submitted my resume to many jobs but no one called me..

HR didn't renew my contract. Now I have to look all over again..

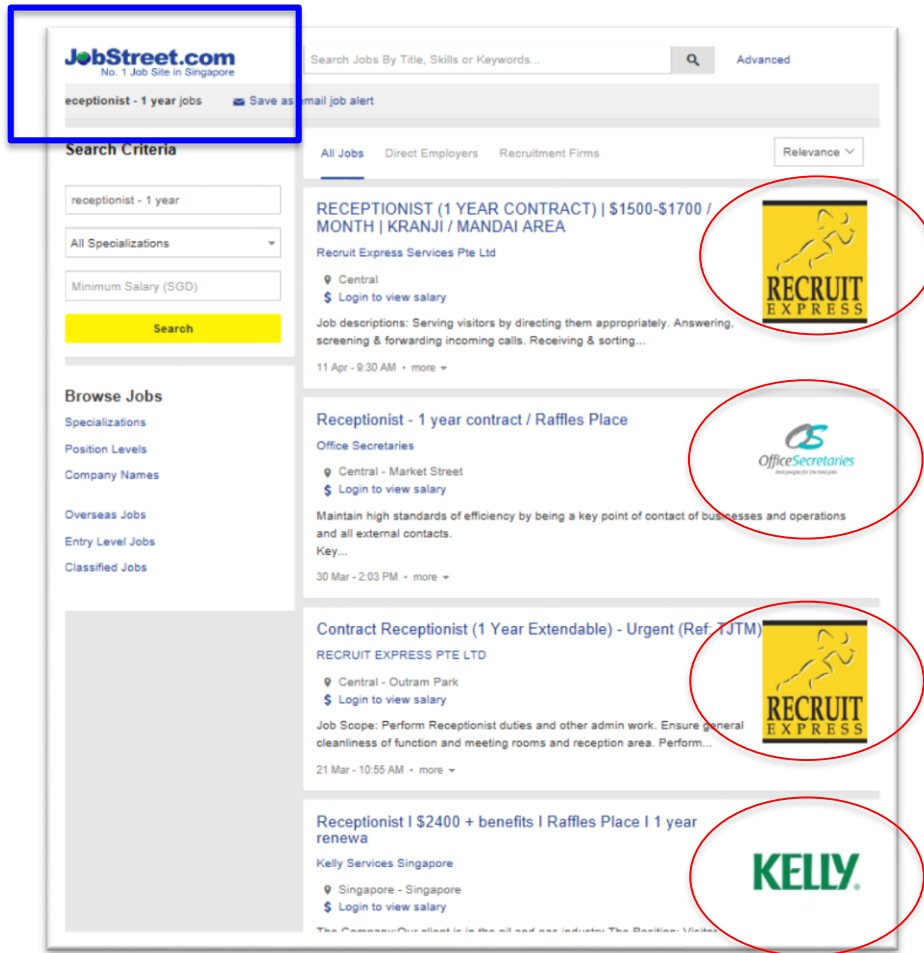
At the End of the Day... Recruiters are Only Human



Happiness is when...

- Resumes are neat and complete
- Candidates are pleasant, responsive and truthful

Jobs Applied Through an Employment Agency



Many companies use
Employment Agencies to
search for candidates

More than 100 people may apply to each position!



30 sec / resume!



With only 30 seconds spent viewing each resume, it is important that the recruiter sees you as a good match quickly

Why are Recruiters Not Calling Me?

1. Weak resume

- Skills listed are not a good match
- Messy; Not formatted well
- Insufficient information
- Choppy job history

2. Inappropriate photographs used

3. Poor telephone skills (if you're not getting a call back after the initial chat)

How do I
improve on this?



Tailor your resume for specific types of jobs

Sample Job Description for Admin Assistant

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Duties:

- Attending to visitors, serving tea/coffee
- Answering and screening phone calls promptly and accurately
- Arrange lunch, maintaining and tracking of stationeries and pantry items
- Handle courier and postage matters
- Provide administrative support to the office
- Maintaining office cleanliness and maintenance
- Ad-hoc duties as assigned

Requirements:

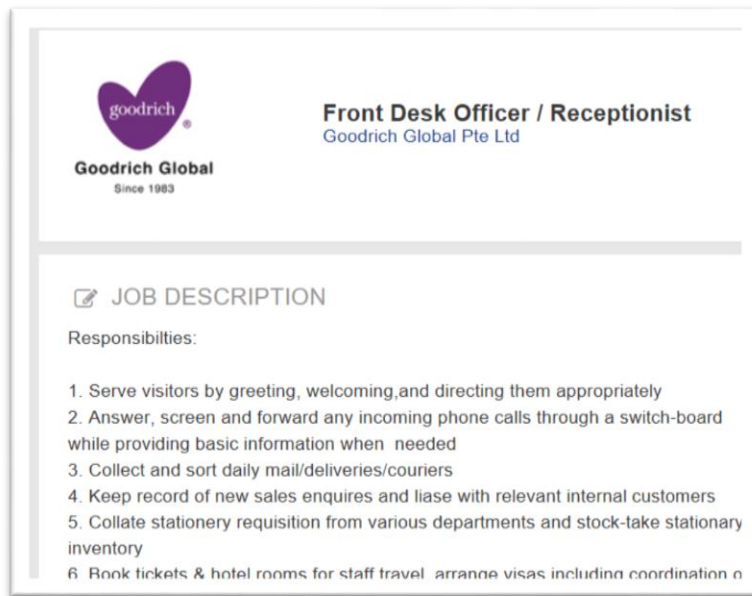
- GCE 'N' Level or any relevant working experience
- Good telephone etiquette
- Proficient in MS Office and PC literate
- Able to commit 6 months
- Mon to Fri
- 9am to 6pm
- Transport provided

Have you done these duties before? If so, make sure that they are listed down in your resume. Recruiters often do a Boolean search for good candidates' work profiles

How strong are you in MS Word / Excel / Powerpoint and email (Outlook / Lotus Notes)? Note it down (Good / Average / Basic)

Admin Assistant, Secretary, Personal Assistant – All the same?

Just as work experience has to match well to the job description, so must your job title!



If you are in Customer Service and take lots of calls as part of your work, would you be suitable for the role?

Yes! So make sure you also include “Receptionist” and “Front Desk Officer” in your CV so the recruiter doesn’t miss you out.



How do I add this in my CV?

Admin Assistant, Secretary, Personal Assistant – All the same?

How do you add this in your CV?

1. Add in it to your job title

Job Title:

Customer Service Officer (Receptionist
/ Front Desk Officer)

OR

2. Add it to your summary

Customer Service Officer interested in
Customer Service / Receptionist / Front
Desk Officer roles

Jobs with similar title

- Customer Service / Front Desk Officer / Receptionist
- Business Development / Sales & Marketing / Relationship Management / Channel Development /
- Secretary / Personal Assistant / Admin Assistant / Executive Assistant
- Accounts / Finance / Credit / Billing / Collections /

And many more..

Which Resume Would you Pick?

PERIOD WORKING EXPERIENCE

MAR 2015 TILL DEC 2016
 Handle inbound orders & enquiries (via phone calls, faxes and emails) from customer & distributors
 Reply to emails, and follow-up with internal work groups
 enquiry closure
 Order status update & reconciliation with customers & distributor
 Process sales quotation
Order Processing
 Order entering and processing
 Submission of orders to Logistics according to cut-off time
 Coordinate with Logistics for local deliveries, daily shipment & forwarder collection
 Billing of stock placement at customer's premises
 Credit note creation
Administrative
 Manage filing of customer orders, invoices & other documents
 Retrieval of documents (eg. CTC invoices, COA, MSDS etc) upon customer request.

April 2014 to present DCA Architects Pte Ltd Receptionist cum Admin Asst.

- Answer & screen incoming call, take and relay messages
- Monitoring of staff movement for up to date recording
- Welcome & greet guests and lead them to the meeting room cum drinks serving if necessary when office aunty is unavailable
- Coordinate for meeting room booking
- To ensure cleanliness and tidiness at the reception area
- Handling of incoming correspondence and fax by recording the document, scan, email and circulate to the project team
- HR duties including updating of each and individual staff's medical leave and for month end up submission to the finance dept
- Arranging local and overseas couriers and postages
- Liaise with vendor for delivery and maintenance
- Other duties as and when instructed



- Messy formatting
- Doesn't show job title
- Experience listed does not match job scope



- Neat formatting
- Experience is a good match to job scope

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Make things easier for the recruiter by providing this information in your resume

1. **Last drawn / current monthly salary** (and any bonuses, separately)
2. **Expected monthly salary** (range is ok)
3. **Notice period** (immediate / 1 month notice etc)
4. **Employment flexibility** (Open to temporary, contract, part time positions)
5. **Citizenship** (Singaporean / PR / Foreigner)
6. **Attach testimonials** (if any)
7. **MS Word / Excel / Powerpoint and Email** (Good / Average / Basic)
8. **Reasons for leaving your previous jobs under each job**

Why are Recruiters Not Calling Me?

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- **Choppy job history**

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Explaining a Choppy Work History (Staying in each job < 2 years)



“The job was not what I was looking for”

“Childcare reasons”

“I didn’t like my boss”

“The job was too far from home”

What do you think of these reasons for leaving?

Present your reasons for leaving well

“The job was not what I was looking for”

“I wished to do admin work but the job only involved filing which limited my career growth”

“Childcare reasons”

“I left work to care for my 3 year old. I have now found a caregiver and can commit to work.”

“I didn’t like my boss”

“Would like to seek a job where the management style is a better fit.”

Tip: Highlight in your resume your choppy job history with good reasons, and assure the recruiter that you are committed to staying in the role should the work environment fit your needs

“The job was too far from home”

“The office shifted from Jurong to Pasir Ris, and it took me 1.5 hours to get to work which was not productive”

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Use Appropriate Photos (if you have to)



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First Impressions Count – Boost your Telephone Skills

- **The first “Hello”**
 - ✓ Not.. “Yah? Who are you? Why?”
- **Do you need to step away from your desk / call back?**
 - ✓ Tell the recruiter! Don’t just whisper/be curt and get have that misunderstood for rudeness
- **Prepare your short and sweet introduction**
 - ✓ Tell me about your work with [ex-company]
 - ✓ Why are you looking for a new job?
- **Tell recruiters when to expect your resume**
 - ✓ If you can only send them your resume 2 days later, let them know
- **Thank them** – (not just “ok bye”)



Following Up with a Recruiter



- **2-3 days after sending resume:** Email / call the recruiter with a good introduction to who you are
 - **Ask for feedback** on your profile and how you can be a better match (salary/ work experience etc)
- **Every month:** Follow up with recruiters on job opportunities via email / call.

On the Job

1. Attitude to learning and additional duties

- The impression you make by taking notes
- “Let me know if I can provide any assistance”
- “I’d be happy to learn”

2. Punctuality

- Inform your supervisor of any delays (>5 min) via email / text
- Being consistently 10-15 minutes late – not OK

3. Honesty

- Being truthful about your working hours



On the Job

4. Taking leave – etiquette

- ✓ How much advance notice to provide?
- ✓ Avoid peak periods at work
- ✓ Do not book tickets before you take leave
- ✓ Urgent leave:
 - Email and SMS/call your supervisor.
 - Alert supervisor of important work matters
 - Offer to come in early the next day to clear any outstanding work.



On the Job - The Foundation for Career Growth

5. Initiative

✓ Asking for feedback from supervisor on your performance monthly

“Just wanted to find out how you have found my performance, and if there is anything you think I can improve on?”

✓ Letting your supervisor know of the obstacles you are facing

E.g. work timings, communication with colleagues, scope) instead of struggling and making a bad impression



Popular FAQs on Working with Recruiters

- **What if I have less qualifications than required in the job description?**
 - ✓ Most times, your work experience is more important than your qualifications
 - ✓ Therefore, highlight your most relevant work experience in front, and include the qualifications at the end of your resume
- **Is a cover letter necessary?**
 - ✓ Not unless your role is very niche; or if you are able to tailor the cover letter in depth for the company's operations
 - E.g. explaining why your past experience / knowledge in aircraft maintenance with Qatar Airways will help in your application to Singapore Airlines)
- **Must I match my resume using the exact words in the job description?**
 - ✓ If you can – do include the key words at least
 - ✓ Recruiters usually do a Boolean search e.g. (“legal secretary” AND “corporate real estate” AND “mandarin”) if they are looking for a mandarin speaking legal secretary in a particular practice area

Popular FAQs on Working with Recruiters

- **Will using a recruitment agency reduce my chances of getting a job since the client has to pay the agency?**
 - ✓ Hiring Managers usually would ask recruiters to search for hard-to-fill roles and would have set aside a budget for hiring
 - ✓ However, if the company has an internal referral – it is natural that the money saved would be a motivation to look at those candidates first
 - ✓ Consider: If your resume is not particularly strong, a recruiter with a strong working relationship with the employer can help you explain your case and provide a better chance of being granted an interview
- **Do I have to pay the recruitment agency for finding me a job?**
 - ✓ Typically not – recruitment agencies these days are only paid by the employer
 - ✓ However, it is common practice for agencies to charge candidates a fee should the candidate leave the role before a specified amount of time (usually 1-2 months)

Contacts



Visit our website for job opportunities and deposit your resume with us:

www.officesecretaries.com.sg/jobs