

Focus your search for greater credibility.

It can be tough searching for a job. It's easy to lose focus of your overall job goals, especially if you have been searching for a while. And losing focus can be very damaging to your overall credibility.

According to Barry Elkus, a Partner at Gilman Partners, “Employers want candidates who very closely match their job profiles. If you apply for a position where you don’t meet the criteria or are missing one of the ‘must-haves’ you can very easily lose your credibility with that employer. It’s best to only apply for the jobs where you are confident you meet at least 80% of the critical requirements.”

Barry offers this additional advice to increase your odds for a successful search:

Stay focused on the types of roles you WANT and are QUALIFIED for.

“You should be able to describe the ideal target position and type of organization. If you come across an opportunity that doesn’t fit, think twice before you apply because chances are that neither you nor the employer would be happy in the long run.”

Be realistic.

Don’t exaggerate your skills or expertise. For example, “If the job description asks for someone with specific marketing experience in the medical device industry and you only have marketing expertise in consumer products, chances are you won’t be a good fit for the role.”

Be honest — with yourself and the prospective employer.

If you read a job description and think “Hey that’s me perfectly and I’d love that role!” then submit your resume. If on the other hand you read it and think “Well, some of my experience matches and I could certainly do that job” then you should think twice about submitting your resume. In this economic environment, employers are focused on candidates who can start achieving and performing with minimal start-up time.

Don’t overdo it.

If the job posting requests a resume and cover letter, only send that information. Peripheral information is generally distracting to the recruiter or potential employer. You want to come across as interested but not desperate. If they are interested in you, they’ll request more information as the process unfolds.

Think twice — before hitting the send button.

Try to imagine yourself in the recruiter’s or employer’s shoes and how they might perceive the words, statements and information you send. If you are being overzealous or overbearing, take a deep breath and rethink your strategy.

The bottom line?

“It’s important to establish credibility at the beginning, so don’t try to be all things to all employers. Trust your gut, know your target, and only apply for the positions that you know you are well qualified for.”