



In today's world of ever changing technology, there is a vast array of electronic devices and Internet tools to help people conduct business and stay connected – e-mail, cell phones, PDA's and smartphones, texting and instant messaging, plus numerous personal and professional networking websites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and more. This proliferation of new resources has dramatically changed the hiring landscape for both employers and job seekers, even in a traditional industry like the golf business. Many golf employers are using new, more efficient procedures for handling resumes and job applications (e-mail delivery, online websites, etc.) and PGA Professionals are taking advantage of technology in their job searches.

However, this new wave of advanced communication options also brings some potential pitfalls to job seekers who misuse electronic technology and the Web or ignore professional etiquette. If you are involved in a job search, here are some tips:

1. **Follow directions** – If the employer is requesting resumes via e-mail only or through an online website, in most cases it's in your best interest to follow those instructions, rather than trying to circumvent the employer's wishes by sending a hard copy or delivering your resume in person. It's also important to pay close attention if the employer specifies how to make follow up contact.
2. **Use a professional e-mail address** – While whimsical or off color e-mail addresses may be OK for personal use, they have no place in the business world and may not create the best first impression with a potential employer. Consider establishing a professional e-mail address for business purposes that adds credibility and immediately identifies you to the recipient. For example, mikejones@pga.com, not partyanimal@yahoo.com.
3. **Use business format** – Keep in mind that business related e-mail should be more formal than personal e-mail and should follow many of the same principles of standard business letter format.
 - Avoid abbreviations and slang that you might use in texting or personal e-mail – U instead of you, plz instead of please, 2 instead of to or too, thanx instead of thanks, etc.
 - Unless you know the recipient personally, address them as Mr., Ms., Mrs., Dr., etc.
 - Don't write an e-mail in all caps (considered to be shouting) or in all lower case with no capitalization.
 - Use a signature that includes your contact information – name, title, facility, phone number, e-mail address, etc.
4. **Spell check and re-read** – E-mail messages are sometimes composed quickly and it's easy to misspell or miss a word. Before you hit "send," re-read your message to make sure you are communicating clearly and haven't missed anything. Use your spell checker, but don't rely entirely on it – spell check won't catch it if you have an incorrect spelling for a particular use of a word (to/too/two, here/hear, their/there, etc.).
5. **Minimize attachments** – To make things easier for the employer and to make sure none of your application documents are left behind, consider attaching your cover letter, resume, references, and any additional items as one document, rather than a separate attachment for each item.
6. **Identify your files** – If you are attaching a resume to an e-mail, label it with a filename that the recipient can easily identify when they save it to their computer or forward it to others involved in the hiring process. For example, `mike_jones_resume.doc`, not `mikesresume.doc` or `headproresume.doc`.
7. **Observe boundaries** – Many people consider their cell phone "private," so even if you managed to track down the employer's cell phone number, avoid calling the cell number unless you are invited to do so.
8. **Stick with land lines** – For any telephone conversations with a prospective employer, try to use a land line if possible and make the call from a private location. Many phone interviews and calls to key hiring contacts have been ruined by a spotty cell phone connection or excessive background noise.

9. **Watch your thumbs** – At all costs, avoid using a Blackberry or other hand held device to send an important e-mail to an employer. No matter how good you can thumb type, there's too great a chance your message will be full of typos.
10. **Manage your digital footprint** – Many employers may look beyond your resume and references and could use online background check services to learn more about you. Be judicious about what you post on social networking sites and limit access to friends and family if it's something you wouldn't want an employer to see.

Good luck, and please don't hesitate to contact me if I can provide assistance with any PGA employment services.

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