**The Jungle**
**Focus on Recruitment, Pay and Getting Ahead**
**by Erin White**
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"Some online job hunters are finding success by tracking down hiring managers and contacting them directly instead of submitting their resumes by the click-and-hope method."

Judy Covington, looking for a job in corporate training and development, figured out a way to prevent her resume from getting buried with scores of other applicants: she does some detective work.

About a year ago, the Rocky Hills, N.J. resident saw a job on Monster.com in a new unit of an insurance company. It didn't name the unit or the hiring manager's name. Instead of only submitting her resume on Monster, she went to the Careers section of the insurance company's web site. She found several jobs listed for new information-services business and figured this was the new unit mentioned in the Monster posting. She then called the switchboard and asked the receptionist who to talk to. She was forwarded to an administrative assistant, who gave her three other names, one of whom turned out to be the hiring manager. Ms. Covington spoke with him, figured out his e-mail address once they got off the phone, and sent him an e-mail with her resume. Her efforts landed her a four-month consulting gig.

Ms. Covington's approach offers a solution to one of the big dilemmas of job hunting in the internet age. How can an applicant stand out?

With so many jobs posted online, applicants find it much easier to submit their resumes to dozens of openings without much extra effort. But with hundreds of other applicants doing the exact same thing, the chances of success with the click-and-hope method dims.

Simply submitting a resume to a general address likely will land it in a big pile in human resources. Your resume could get filtered out of the candidate pool simply because it lacks certain key words. So some successful job seekers are taking a different tack: they're tracking down the identity of the actual hiring managers and targeting them. The approach involves some creative sleuthing.

That's what one New York woman did to land an interview for a university fund-raising job. She'd left her old job as a television executive in December 2003. Since then, she had submitted her resume online to about 40 or 50 jobs. "I sent in lots of resumes to the pile and never followed up," she says.

This past fall, she became more aggressive. She spotted a job opening at a university listed in a nonprofit group's newsletter. Like many listings, it didn't provide the

name of the hiring manager. But it did list the title of the supervisor of the open position. The job seeker went to the university's web site and found the name of a person who held the position. So rather than just submitting her resume and cover letter to a general address, she also sent an e-mail to the woman she thought was the hiring manager. The hiring manager responded, and the woman got the interview.

She didn't get the job, but she figured she was onto something. So she tried the approach again with another job that listed the supervisor's position. The job seeker called the company switchboard and asked the receptionist who the person was. The receptionist obliged. This time, it worked. In December, she got the job.

A few years ago, office manager Mary Beth Butkovic had a similar experience—but on the opposite side of the fence. She was hiring someone to succeed herself and placed an ad in a local newspaper. The ad described the company's business as a decal manufacturer and its location. But the ad didn't include the name of the company, Ms. Butkovic's name, or her phone number. So she was surprised when she got a call from a job seeker about the position. "I was really shocked, because I wasn't expecting to get any phone calls," she recalls. "She was rather pushy. She said, 'I'm interested in this position. When can I come in and talk?'" Ms. Butkovic agreed to schedule an interview, "mostly to get her off the phone."

Ms. Butkovic learned that the woman had recalled seeing another ad the company had placed about six months earlier for a part-time employee to help Ms. Butkovic. This ad listed the name of the company, a description of its business and a phone number. The job seeker decided there couldn't be too many decal manufacturers in the area and correctly guessed the new ad was for the same company. "It was pretty enterprising on her part," says Ms. Butkovic, who is now an office manager at a public-relations firm in Cleveland.

It turned out the woman had done exactly the right thing. Her resume didn't present her skills well, and Ms. Butkovic probably would have passed over the applicant in favor of one of the 60 or so others who had applied. But in the interview, Ms. Butkovic realized the woman was a great fit and hired her.