



Job Opportunities Online: The Changing Hiring Process in Illinois

by Norman Kelewitz and Dennis Hoffman

Not too many years ago, firm XYZ would announce hiring in the local newspaper or over a radio or TV station and the jobseeker line would form immediately. This traditional way of seeking workers was very time consuming for the firm's personnel staff as well as other workers at the business. Smaller firms had similar issues when hiring from a large stack of job applications that had been submitted over a period of time.

Often the hiring firm would obtain the services from a local Illinois Department of Employment Security office or private employment agency to control, review, and eliminate applicants in the hiring process. Although still prevalent today, employment was often the result of "whom you know" as opposed to who had the best qualifications and skills. However, the entire job application process changed as technology became accessible in the 1990's.

Table 1: Statewide Job Opportunities By Major Occupational Group - September 2014

Major Occupational Group Online Job Ads	
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	28,442
Sales and Related Occupations	27,082
Management Occupations	23,883
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	23,837
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	19,894
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	18,621
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	16,538
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	9,559
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	8,121
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	7,527
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	7,241
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	7,121
Production Occupations	6,376
Healthcare Support Occupations	4,173
Community and Social Services Occupations	4,142
Construction and Extraction Occupations	3,465
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	3,373
Personal Care and Service Occupations	2,652
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	2,101
Protective Service Occupations	1,851
Legal Occupations	1,412
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	330
Military Specific Occupations	33

Source: The Conference Board Help Wanted OnLine Data Series prepared by the Illinois Department of Employment Security - Economic Information & Analysis Division

Applying for jobs online has been the primary avenue for jobseekers to acquire employment for a number of years. The former processes for obtaining work such as sending a resume by mail, calling the employer, or visiting the employment office of a business or agency has become less common. Employers want job seekers to complete the applications and send resumes online for a number of reasons including time saving and ease of reviewing applications. Most job opportunities are currently posted online to facilitate and streamline the hiring process.

This study examines job openings posted online for the state as a whole and by region. Illinois is a very diverse state with many different types of communities and industries. Are some of the employment opportunities more available in the different regions of Illinois? Are some of the job offerings only available in certain areas? Are the job openings in the various industry groups evenly distributed statewide?

Reviewing the September 2014 Help Wanted OnLine job openings may identify what regions and what industries have the most employment

opportunities in the state of Illinois. This data set produced by the Conference Board measures the number of new, first-time openings from online sources and job openings reposted from the previous month.

Help Wanted OnLine obtains openings from over 16,000 internet job boards, corporate boards and sites serving niche markets and smaller geographic areas. Help Wanted OnLine uses web spider crawler technology to scrape among others: online job boards, newspapers, niche, free and local sources and aggregator sites and compile the top occupations that are currently posting jobs for hire. The Help Wanted OnLine data is updated monthly on the IDES website: <http://www.ides.illinois.gov/LMI/Pages/HWOL.aspx>.

Table 1 lists the total number of online job openings by major occupational group in Illinois in September 2014. The top six categories are occupational groups which are considered white collar jobs such as Computer Analysts, Salesmen, Managers, and Office Support Occupations, Healthcare Practitioners, and Business and Financial Occupations. Transportation and Material Moving occupations such as truck drivers are the seventh largest group of employment opportunities. The bottom five categories include Social Science, Protective Service, Legal, Farming, and Military Service Occupations. Surprisingly the number of Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations were near the middle with 8,121 job openings and the

Healthcare Support Occupations had significantly fewer openings at 4,173.

Job Opportunities by Economic Development Region

Table 2 (on last page) lists the total number of online job openings by major occupational group in each of the 10 Economic Development Regions in Illinois in September 2014. Healthcare and Technical Occupations had the most advertised job ads in six regions. Sales and Related Occupations led two lists. Transportation and Material Moving Occupations were advertised the most in the Rockford Area. Computer and Mathematical Occupations topped the list in the Chicago Metro Area, which is the largest region in the state.

A few Major Occupational Groups appeared on most of the top five lists of the regions. Sales and Related and Office and Administrative Support Occupations were on all the top five lists. Transportation and Material Moving and Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations were on the lists for nine of the ten areas. The Chicago Metro Area had neither Transportation and Material Moving nor Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations among its top five. Education, Training and Library Occupations were on two top five lists: Champaign Area and Rockford Area. Production Occupations were on only the Charleston-Mattoon Area top five listing. Computer and Mathematical Occupations led the pack in the Chicago Metro Area. Although the

Chicago Metro Area dominates the number of jobs statewide, substantial numbers of employment opportunities are evenly spread throughout Illinois.

Conclusion

In the new world of online job ads statewide, Computer and Mathematical Occupations had the most openings. Most of these openings were clustered in the Chicago Metro Area which is the financial and high tech hub of the state. A fair amount of uniformity among the sub-state regions was evident with Sales and Related, Management Occupations, Office and Administrative Support, Transportation and Material Moving and Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations among the groups with the most openings.

Reviewing the number of statewide job openings for September 2014, numerous employment opportunities are clearly available for jobseekers. Even among Major Occupational Groups with the least number of job advertisements such as Legal Occupations, Protective Service Occupations, and Social Science Occupations, the number of job openings were significantly more than 1,000. Thus, applying for work online and correctly completing the applications has become the major process for acquiring gainful employment for jobseekers.

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Table 2: Job Opportunities for Regions by Major Occupational Groups, September 2014

Central (Decatur-Springfield Area)		East Central (Champaign-Danville Area)	
Occupational Group	Online Job Ads	Occupational Group	Online Job Ads
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	1,049	Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	800
Transportation & Material Moving	1,034	Transportation & Material Moving	790
Sales & Related	981	Transportation & Material Moving	770
Office & Administrative Support	661	Office & Administrative Support	573
Management	547	Education, Training & Library	427
Northwest (Quad Cities Area)		Southeastern (Charleston-Mattoon Area)	
Occupational Group	Online Job Ads	Occupational Group	Online Job Ads
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	773	Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	385
Sales & Related	628	Transportation and Material Moving	372
Transportation & Material Moving	624	Office & Administrative Support	239
Office and Administrative Support	563	Sales & Related	217
Computer and Mathematical	320	Production	142
North Central (Bloomington-Peoria Area)		Northeast (Chicago Metro Area)	
Occupational Group	Online Job Ads	Occupational Group	Online Job Ads
Sales & Related	1,387	Computer & Mathematical	23,983
Computer & Mathematical	1,260	Management	19,409
Transportation & Material Moving	1,155	Sales & Related	19,040
Office & Administrative Support	1,086	Office & Administrative Support	17,858
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	805	Business & Financial Operations	15,971
Southern (Carbondale-Mt. Vernon Area)		Southwestern (Alton-Belleville Area)	
Occupational Group	Online Job Ads	Occupational Group	Online Job Ads
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	521	Sales & Related	646
Sales & Related	439	Computer & Mathematical	631
Transportation & Material Moving	400	Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	556
Office & Administrative Support	348	Office & Administrative Support	510
Management	181	Transportation & Material Moving	422
Northern Stateline (Rockford Area)		West Central (Galesburg-Quincy Area)	
Occupational Group	Online Job Ads	Occupational Group	Online Job Ads
Transportation & Material Moving	890	Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	318
Sales & Related	849	Sales & Related	264
Office & Administrative Support	671	Office & Administrative Support	177
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	616	Transportation & Material Moving	168
Education, Training & Library	419	Management	139

Source: The Conference Board Help Wanted OnLine Data Series prepared by the Illinois Department of Employment Security - Economic Information & Analysis Division