

IN THIS ISSUE

Happy November! The AIChE Annual Meeting is in full swing in San Francisco. Americans are looking forward to our annual feast Thanksgiving feast. Snow is finally showing up at the lower elevations.

This issue, of course, is the announcement of **the November webinar**, which is the third Thursday this month.

Also, we have two articles about job hunting – one from our past chair about her successful and unsuccessful adventures in job hunting. The other is by Nicholas Meyler, who holds degrees in philosophy and in chemical engineering, and is now a professional recruiter. He gives us great insight into dealing with the bane of the job seeker – the resume robots. Other articles planned for this issue on job hunting were unfortunately OBE (British for either an honour bestowed by the monarch, or “overtaken by events”).

Neil Yeoman writes an interesting engineering education article that he first contemplated writing as an undergraduate. His updates on his ongoing AIChE Engage experiment on C4 -- the proposed amendment to the AIChE constitution changing the requirements for petition candidacies --reflect the realistic rates of response of our membership.

Speaking of rates of response, is there no VLS member who wants to write an article for the next issue? (No more OBE's, please.)

---- Jennifer I. Brand

FROM THE PAST CHAIR: THE MILLENIAL'S WAY OF JOBHUNTING

Amanda Scalza

Job hunting is more convenient than ever! There are hundreds of websites that have job boards, including the AIChE Careers Website. LinkedIn helps recruiters connect with potential employees. Yet, with all these tools, and conveniences, it seems that job hunting really hasn't become any easier.

I have never gotten employment using anything except my own network. While this can be frustrating for many, it is simple to understand if you are the one seeking new employees. We spend so much of our time with our co-workers, Tm [(-)] TJ 12.0 Tf 0.1 0.0 0.0 1.0

First, you must be your own advocate! It does not matter how many people write you great letters of recommendation, if you are not confident, your body language and demeanor will give you away! After one interview, I received feedback that while I seemed knowledgeable and capable, my own lack of self-confidence had led them choose a different candidate.

Second, an interview is a two-way street. I was on a phone interview once with a company who had been acquired six years previously. When I asked questions about the facility, the interviewer complained about how terrible the new company was, and how he wished the merger had never happened. There is no way I would be interested in working at a place with such a negative employee culture!

In the end, remember that finding your next career move is much more important than getting a new job, or the biggest paycheck. It will take patience and many questions, but the best job is one that challenges you, one that helps you grow, and one that you enjoy

There is a solution to this, which is somewhat more time-consuming, but which really is highly advisable for any job applicant who seriously wants to get the job.

PHASE ONE

To begin to beat the 'bots, the job applicant who seriously wants to get the job will read the job description carefully, and focus on the key "buzz words" that the job description's author has chosen to list. These words, realistically, NEED to be in your resume for you to pass the screening process of the computer program. So, without lying or exaggerating, you need to individually "tailor" your resume for each specific position, and make sure that you use those keywords appropriately within the text of your resume.

As a recruiter, I have seen dozens of thousands of resumes, and I have actually seen a number with a tag-like list of keywords, perhaps a paragraph long, at the end of the resume. This will not work, since screening programs are designed to also reject this approach. Your best bet to getting your resume seen is to organically include the appropriate words within the text of your resume, selectively and in such a manner that it doesn't look artificial or contrived. It is not wrong to even insert phrases used in the job description into your resume, if done sparingly and accurately.

For example, if a job description calls for experience with HPLC, organic synthesis, colloidal separations, and characterizations using cyclic voltammetry, your resume will

be rejected unless you legitimately use those words in the text. Of course, if you choose to use the words without having the experience, you will end up with a lot of explaining to do and probably a very short phone interview which will probably be the last time that company will ever contact you.

So, never lie, but do make sure that your resume directly responds to the details of the job description, unequivocally using the words that are most easily recognized by the automated process. Do not use non-standard type fonts or formats in your resume, either, because these will simply be confusing and once again lead to peremptory rejection.

Do not include photos or illustrations, either, unless you are certain that a human being will review the resume. Personally, I love resumes with great photos of experimental data, etc., but I am a human,

resumes go to HR with perfectly-qualified applicants who never see the light of day, because the HR manager is too busy, or because the hiring manager may not have communicated fully with the HR department.

Woody Allen once said, "90% of success is just showing up." This means if you can get your resume in front of a real human, you have dramatically increased your odds. Take this message to heart!

THE WORLD OUT THERE: EDUCATION AND PETITION SIGNATURE UPDATES

Neil Yeoman

What is Education?

In an earlier column I noted that there was, and maybe still is, a move to have engineering education be like law and medicine, that is, that admission to professional training requires a bachelors degree. The argument for doing so was that

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Petition Candidacy

In my October column I discussed a proposed amendment to the AIChE constitution, Amendment C4, that I feel will effectively eliminate the petition candidate option for getting a name on the ballot for election to the AIChE Board of Directors. I oppose that amendment and have been urging people to vote against it. Those who support the amendment claim that getting ~600 signatures is a reasonable requirement.

Based on my personal experience as one of only four people who have been petition candidates in the last half century I know that getting even 100 signatures, the current requirement, can be a real challenge. Those who support the amendment claim that the electronic media make getting the larger number relatively easy, so I tried a test. Using AIChE Engage, which reaches all AIChE members who have valid e-mail addresses in the AIChE database, I asked readers to respond in one of three ways: 1) that they agreed with me, 2) that they disagreed with me, or 3) that they were undecided. I did that on the day my column in the VLS newsletter was published, about October 10. If those who support the proposed amendment were correct by the time of the draft of this column (November 11th) there would long since have been much more than 600 responses supporting one of the first two options I offered the readers. So far there have been only 65 total responses, seven

from members of the BOD who authorized that the proposed amendment get on the ballot and 58 others, a tiny fraction of what those who support amendment C4 tell us they would have expected. Of the 58 others, 54 agree that amendment C4 was a bad idea, two were undecided, and two responded in a way that I could not tell how they would vote, so I carry them as undecided. I carry as disagreeing with me the four BOD members who did no more than explain why the amendment got on the ballot and the one who by some interpretation might have been challenging my logic. The two who acknowledge that the BOD could have done better I carry as undecided.

The claim that the electronic media makes getting 600 signatures reasonable is based the number of people a potential candidate can reach through social media like Facebook. AIChE Engage goes to about 26,000 AIChE members and it only drew 65

ATTENDING A VLS MEETING

Join by internet:

- <https://aiche.webex.com/mw3000/mywebex/default.do?siteurl=aiche>
- Search for VLS or by meeting number 635 888 409

Join by phone: Access code: 634 167 017

- 1-866-469-3239 Call-in toll-free number (US/Canada)
- 1-650-429-3300 Call-in toll number (US/Canada)
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Attendance at a Virtual Local Section