

Finding an Administrative Job at Harvard or MIT: Harvard and MIT Recruiters

Part 1: Harvard and MIT Recruiters

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[Introductions]

ELIZABETH ANCARANA: My name is Elizabeth Ancarana. I'm the Assistant Provost for Faculty Development and Diversity here at Harvard. And I'm just delighted, so pleased to be here co-hosting this event with my colleague Laura Fisher from the faculty of Arts and Sciences. We did this five years ago for the first time, and it was successful then. And we said let's join forces with our colleagues down the street at MIT and see how it goes. So I think this is going to be a really, really informative session. Thank you, everybody, for coming and for spending your time with us here today.

So without further ado, why don't we just go ahead, and if each of our recruiters could introduce-- Chuck's going to go first. Just introduce yourself, and then your presentation. And I know you have to leave around 10:30. And then we'll have Vicki and Tony.

CHARLES CURTI: I'm Chuck Curti from Radcliffe Human Resources.

VICKI BURGOYNE: I'm Vicki Burgoyne. I'm Staffing Specialist at MIT.

ANTHONY WILLIAMS: Tony Williams, Staffing Specialist at MIT.

CHARLES CURTI:

Stand by for technical updates. Good morning, all you absolutely fabulous people. Welcome to Harvard. Welcome to the Cambridge area, for those of you who have recently moved here. This is a very exciting time. It's a very challenging time. It can also be a very stressful time. Looking

for a new job is right up there with going to the dentist in terms of the joy and the exuberance that one approaches both experiences.

So Elizabeth, whom I have worked with for many years and who is terrific, and [INAUDIBLE], who's outside somewhere, and some of the other-- she's in the back. There's [INAUDIBLE]-- and Ruth Molina from HERC, who you'll meet later this morning, and myself, we're here to be resources for you. We are here to help you in any and every way that we possibly can.

One word of disclaimer, or one word of qualification that I'd like to begin with. We're here to help you and make this hopefully less stressful and less challenging. But searching for a job in the metro Boston area, specifically searching for a job at Harvard, it does take time. If universities move slow, Harvard works at x minus speed. So it can be time-consuming and it can be challenging and it can be frustrating. It can also sometimes be a little dispiriting.

Do not despair. It does require resilience and perseverance, but it does pay off. This has been a very successful program and seminar. And again, you've got a lot of people who are happy to be resources for you. Please leverage us to the degree that you would like or not like. Speaking only for myself, I'm happy to give you feedback on your resumes. I'm happy to give you feedback especially on your cover letters.

At the Radcliffe Institute, which is one of the 13 schools of Harvard, cover letters are required for every position that an individual applies for. And we read them very carefully, not just for style and grammar and punctuation, but what did the person tell us, and what did they tell us about why they wanted that job. So with that, I'm going to begin.

SPEAKER 1: It's not showing on the screen

CHARLES CURTI: I can't spell technology, let alone manage it. So the agenda. It's really basic. Being a Candidate 101. Some Harvard facts, jobs at Harvard, how to apply for a job in today's world, your resume and your cover letter, interviewing, and the all-important thank you and follow up.

So I'm going to ask a favor. If you have questions during my presentation, we're not in grammar school. You don't have to raise your hand. Just call it out. You don't need to wait for me to be finished because sometimes it's in the stream of the moment that it's most effective.

Some Harvard facts. The oldest institution of higher education in America. And if you haven't seen the statue of John Harvard in Harvard Yard, please do. You have to put your hand on his foot for good luck. It's why it's so shiny. We have over 18,000 students. But we have over 16,000 staff members. Now that does include faculty. It does include full- and part-time staff members. But it makes us the fifth largest employer in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Now the joke about higher education in New England is that in New England, colleges and universities are like CVS and Walgreens. There's a college and university on every street corner. And that certainly is true when you come to the metropolitan Boston area because we are-- fortunately, we are lucky to have so many colleges here. And I really think that it's part of the economic engine of this region, and it has an enormous economic impact in terms of providing jobs and how it fuels the local economy. It's something I, as an HR person, take a lot of pride in.

Our school color is crimson. I don't even know why I put that in. But I thought it's a fun fact for those of you who didn't know it. And our president took just over a year as Lawrence Bacow, who had previously been the president of Tufts University. We have 43 people who are current or former faculty members who are Nobel Laureates, and we just got our 43rd one, I believe, two days ago. And we also had our first female Nobel Laureate-- I think her name is Jill Buck-- that was several years ago. So we're very proud of that as well. Whoo. Sorry.

Our motto is Veritas, which is Latin for truth. And I think it's maybe because I'm putting my hand on the desk. All right. I'll keep doing this back and forth.

I love to read books. I don't like Kindles. I don't like Nooks. I like having a book in my hand. So I put this in because we have the world's largest university library system, and we have 13 schools and colleges. All right. I'll just keep doing this.

So at any given time at Harvard, there are over 700 jobs that are open. And if you haven't been on the Harvard website, I would urge you to go on it almost every day because jobs go up and go

down on a daily basis. And there are also some logins that you can use for when you want to create a job alert. But this is just a range of some of the jobs that you can possibly think of. Staff assistants, police officers, admissions counselors, professors, computer technicians, project managers. A complete list. It's hundreds and hundreds of jobs.

And all jobs are on the website. Bookmark that in your web browser. Some people have said they find Internet Explorer easier to use. I use Firefox. I find them both fine, and I don't have any difficulties. Neither have I really heard of people having any difficulties. On the website, you can search by school. You can search by job function. You can search by keywords.

But you may see, as you will in lots of colleges, that jobs are what are called term limited, which means they have specific end dates. Most often those jobs are grant funded. So that's why, when the grant ends, the position ends. But many times those grant-funded positions will say, as they do at Radcliffe, that they come with full university benefits, so they're fully benefited positions.

So how do you apply for a job? So in order to be official job candidate at Harvard, you have to register with Harvard Careers, which is the website. It does take a few minutes. It does take some clicks. You'll be asked to create a user ID and password. You can upload your resume, or you can upload your resume and cover letter when you apply for a specific job.

One of the advantages of uploading your resume is that people like me-- who I do a lot of recruiting-- we go into Harvard Careers-- used to be called Aspire-- Harvard Careers, and we do keyword searches on candidates for when we have an open position. So let's say I'm looking for someone as a project manager who has worked with grants from the National Institutes of Mental Health, and I put in those keywords, and those keywords are on your resume, that's a good way for me to find your resume when I'm searching. So that's a way that we do what's called cold calling or passive recruiting.

Here's what I recommend. Always submit a resume and a cover letter in one document. And I'll explain why. I have found that sometimes when people go to upload a cover letter, it doesn't always come through because I'll call people and say, you know, you've got a great resume. But I don't see a cover letter, which is required for the job. And they're like, I did. Let me email it to

you right now. So if you do it in one document and you do it under resume, I guarantee you it will go through. And unfortunately, I've had too many bad experiences with that.

Resumes always go directly to the job that you're applying for unless you're just uploading a generic resume as you register. Always list an email address, and you will get a confirmation that your resume has been uploaded and been received. And then you can go back periodically and update it as need be.

My opinion is if you see a job that you're interested in, apply for it. I wouldn't apply for 100 jobs. I wouldn't apply for 50 jobs. But if you see five or eight or 12 jobs that are of interest to you, apply for them. Sometimes you have to try on a lot of hats to see which one is the right fit. If you apply, you give the recruiter in that school the opportunity to review your skills, your qualifications, your competencies for that position. And if you only apply for two or three, you're limiting yourself. Do what you are most comfortable with, but I'm one of the people who believe more is better. And I-- hi. I'm sorry.

AUDIENCE: Just when you're finished, I have a question on that. What if the two jobs that seem like they're a good fit are within the same school?

CHARLES CURTI: So if they're within the same school, what you can say in a cover letter, and what I've said when I've applied, is dear hiring officer-- and we'll get to cover letters in just a minute, but I would say dear hiring officer, I am very interested in this position. I also do want to disclose that I have applied for a similar position. So it just gives the heads up as opposed to, wait a minute, what is this person papering the world? And it shows that you've put some thought into it.

Read the job description very carefully. And please only apply for a job that you do meet the basic qualifications for. You don't want to waste your time applying for a job that may require a licensure or a specific degree because then you'll get a rejection, and who wants to be rejected? But if you meet the basic qualifications and you're interested, definitely apply.

Can take some time before you get a response. If you submit an application, you will receive an automatic electronic response. Thank you, you've submitted your application. But it may take a

while for someone to get back to you. I have to share with you that some jobs have as many as 300 to 400 applicants for them. In those situations, it is impossible to contact everyone for a phone interview or an in-person interview. It's just not possible. A recruiter may have 50 jobs that she or he is trying to fill. And if you multiply 50 times 200, that person is going to be living here 24/7 for years.

And so in those cases, sometimes you do receive an electronic declination, and you're like, but I didn't even get called for a phone screen. It's probably because the number of resumes are just so enormous that it's just not logistically possible to phone screen everyone as much as we would like to.

Persistence and patience. It took me two years to get hired. But I did it, and I'm still here 10 years later. And I actually came in as an RA at the School of Public Health and left, and then came back quite a number of years later. And it was amazing to me how many things were the same after an absence of 17 years, and how many things were different. But I really enjoy working for the university, and I hope you all will as well.

So networking. Six degrees of separation isn't just a game with Kevin Bacon. It really does help you connect to people who are hiring officers and who are recruiters. And I will share with you that when someone sends us a resume and cover letter and says this person's looking for a job at Radcliffe, you don't have an opening right now, would you mind giving this person an informational interview, we say yes. Other schools it may be different because of their volume, but we're small enough that we say yes.

If someone sends us a resume of someone that they know who's applied for a job, we will reach out to you as well. But I can't say that that's going to be a consistent experience across the university. But use your contacts. If you do have a LinkedIn account, find other people who may be working for the university. I will acknowledge I'm not a technology or LinkedIn expert, but I do get messages through my LinkedIn account and I do respond to people. So I think that that's a good way to know.

And people can also give you some insight. You know, I'm interested in this department. Can you tell me about it? It's a great department. It's extremely fast-paced. These are the types of

people they look for. This department is a little bit more slower paced. It's very collaborative. In the other department it may be more individual contributor work versus team collaboration work. So it's good to get that background, back channel information.

The Gazette lists events, of course, on campus. It's a great resource for going to university events and meeting people. I used to go to events and hand out my business card and say, I'm looking for a job. If you know of anything, please call me. And actually, someone did. It also gets you the opportunity to see different parts of the university, which they're so different. The cultures are different from school to school. It's a very exciting place.

The other thing to know is that a lot of our schools, including us, we hire temporary help either through third party vendors like a staffing agency, or we hire temporary help sometimes for a week, sometimes for a month, sometimes for three or four days. And I have hired-- I think currently I have five people on staff whom I found in Harvard Careers who we brought in for a week. Then we brought them back for a couple of days. Then we brought them back for a month, and now they've been with us for two or three years.

I can also, however, tell you that I joined Radcliffe in July of 2011. And since that time, I have hired 17 people who technically never applied for a job at Radcliffe. Their resume was in Harvard Careers which, was then called Aspire, and I was doing keyword searches. And it's click, click, click, click over and over and over. And I found their resume, as I find dozens of resumes, and I would send them an email. I saw that you were previously an applicant for a position at Harvard. I don't know if you might be interested or not, but the Radcliffe Institute has this position. If you are interested, here's how to apply, and you can email me directly.

And in eight years we've hired 17 people, and I am very proud to tell you-- because I go back and look at what people's performance evaluations are because that's how I measure our recruiting success-- those people have gotten outstanding performance reviews. So we're like, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Resumes. You know, every resume is different, but it all has the same purpose, which is to get you a job. So a couple of things. They're unique, but they have to represent you. You never, ever say anything on your resume that's not 100% accurate. But if you're applying for two different

jobs and you want to stress two different skill sets, there's nothing wrong with changing the wording in the job description. I worked at college one, I worked at college two.

But when you're writing the resume for the first job, you may want to stress your writing skills. I wrote memos, I wrote reports, I wrote emails, I wrote speeches, I wrote thank you notes, I did a lot of writing for the department. But the second job that you're applying for may focus on being an administrator or a project manager. And in that case, you'd like the job-- you talk about what your responsibilities were-- but you'd say I project managed. I made timelines. I made sure people met their deliverables. I gave status update reports.

As long as it's the truth, it's OK if there's a variation because each job is unique. And one of the wonderful things about word processing is that you can tailor your resume and your cover letter to the specific position you're applying for as long as it is always 100% truthful and accurate.

Effective resumes connect the dots for the recruiter. I cannot tell you how many times I, as a recruiter-- and I'm sure Vicki and Tony will tell you the same thing-- we're reading the resume, we're reading the cover letter, and we're like, this person has this background but they're applying for this job, where's the connection? What was their motivation? And especially, when I talk about cover letters in a little bit, when it doesn't even mention the Radcliffe Institute's name.

I'm applying for a job. Hire me. Dot dot dot dot dot. Hugs and kisses, so and so. It's like, uh, maybe not. So really spend some time going over your resume and try and get as many people's opinions on it. The more feedback you get, the more you are able to hone it and polish it.

And I have to share that job seeking really is like playing tennis or basketball. It is a skill. And because we use it so infrequently, our skills do get rusty. So getting some feedback. I always ask people, get your pen and paper out and start making a list of your competencies like communication, project administration, accomplishments and achievements.

One of the things that I see time and again-- and I'm sure Tony and Vicki do as well-- is when people will take the job description of their last job and put it in their resume. No. I don't want to know what your job description was. I want to know how you did it or didn't do it. Did you do it

well? Did you do it badly? Tell me your achievements. Tell me your accomplishments. Make it your branding statement because if you don't tell me, I'll never know.

What are the opportunity you're seeking? Why at my school? What's the specific background you have that you bring? What are the roles that you provided? I have many times looked at people's resumes, and then I look on LinkedIn, and the resume says this, and LinkedIn says this. Not good. But tell me about your uniqueness, what you are bringing, what's your added value. And Elizabeth is going to send this PowerPoint presentation to everyone.

These resumes have to be letter perfect. Please proofread again and again and again. Typos, spelling errors, grammar errors. It's just not possible. I always say at least have three people proofread it. The one page, if possible. Sometimes when you've been in the work force, that's not possible. If it goes to a second page don't get upset about it as long as it's content and it's substance. I would say go back 10 years. You don't need to go back beyond that because once you have more than 10 years work experience, what you did in the 11th, 12th or 13th year, it's really not applicable.

Work history that is, quote, ancient history, it's not worth your time and energy. It's just so long ago. It's more recent. Yes.

AUDIENCE: On the off chance that you might have an academic background where you do a CV, in that world it's more of the longer the CV the better, you list your publications and all of this. When you're trying to, for example, make a transition, should I cut all of that stuff, cut all the publications and all the presentations?

CHARLES CURTI: I would say make it one to two pages, and then say pages three through are addendum. Make that an addendum. So it's page one, two, and then addendum one, two, three, four. Yes.

AUDIENCE: What about women who've been stay at home moms, so we have a period of blank years, do we address it, or we just assume people will know?

CHARLES CURTI: In your cover letter you can say you were out of the workforce for a period of time, and that explains the gap in your years of service.

ELIZABETH ANCARANA: Chuck, would you say why?

CHARLES CURTI: Well, no. I don't think that that's anyone's business whether you were a stay at home parent, or whether you dropped out to pursue a degree, or whether there were personal-- it's not a recruiter's business. I don't think disclosing parental or marital status is really relevant for any recruiter.

When you're writing your resume, put everything in and then edit out. I promise you it'll be much easier. Focus on the content first. Focus on the format later. I'm never going to ding anyone because they got formatting wrong a little bit because I can't do it. It's really more I'm hiring for your skills, not for your word processing or your graphic design, unless I am hiring you for your word processing and graphic design, which, man, that better be like a Nobel Prize. But it's a marketing tool. Remember, at the end of the day, it's your branding and your marketing tool.

So cover letters. It has to be an original cover letter for each job. Usually the job will say who it reports to. Please take the time to go on the school's website. And if nothing else it, say, hiring officer, department of human resources, Harvard Divinity School, dot dot dot, Cambridge, Massachusetts, dear hiring officer. Put a date, put a salutation. It's just like writing a friendly letter when you're in the fourth grade. And it shows that you've paid attention and taken the time and effort to do so.

Write it yourself. But please do some research. Tell the recruiter why this job specifically in this school specifically is of interest to you, as opposed to this very generic--generic--generic. My dentures slipped. And please proofread. But at the end of it, please say I'd love to meet you for an interview.

You cannot research the job enough. You cannot research the school enough because if someone calls you on the phone, you should be able to talk about the job, about the school, and about yourself without any, um, uh, and then you hear click, click, click, click, click as they frantically try to go online and pull up the job description or pull up information about your school.

And consider your salary expectations. Now in Massachusetts, it is illegal to ask a candidate what are you making in your current job? But we can say can you tell me what your salary expectations in a position are? But we also have salary grades posted for each position, and you can find that on the website, so you have a sense of where positions are.

When you show up for the interview, please show up on time. And if you're delayed, have the phone number and the cell number, ideally, of the person you're meeting with. Bring extra copies of your resume. Please dress professionally. I've had people show up in flip-flops. Didn't make a good impression. Be polite to everyone you meet. I know this sounds a little didactic.

And show some energy. Sometimes you're talking with people, and they're like-- and it's like, OK, I can see that you're breathing, but a little dynamic. When you speak about yourself and your background and your work, try and be specific. Generalities, I like to work. OK, that's good. What do you like to do? How do you like to do it? What are your specific skills? What's your added value here to Radcliffe?

This is an acronym, STAR, Situation, Task, Action. Results. Give us examples. In my last job, I was tasked with this. This was the situation. Here's what I did. Here was the result. Please make it a positive result. Don't tell us about your failures unless we specifically ask for them. And I will ask people, give me your failure and what you learned from it. So be prepared for that as well.

But if you use this as a talking point, and you rehearse this and write it down-- I used to practice in front of the bathroom mirror. The cats thought I was crazy, but it worked. Yes. Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH ANCARANA: Tell me about your-- not weaknesses, but challenges.

CHARLES CURTI: Sure. So thank you for meeting with me today. You've asked me, Elizabeth, about my challenges. I will tell you I believe that learning and development is evolutionary. I strive every day to get better. I'm a very human human being, and there are areas I'd always like to improve my writing skills. I'd always like to improve my technology skills. It is something that I do. It's the reason why I read and subscribe to the Harvard Business Review online so that

it's continuous improvement. Continuous improvement isn't just some cliché buzzword in business speak. It's about you constantly polishing your skills.

And here's an example of a fail. You've asked me about a failure. Here was the failure, and afterwards, as I debriefed and spoke to other people, here's where I thought I went wrong. Here's where I think it went wrong. Here's what I learned, and I didn't repeat the mistake. I mean, I don't expect anyone to be flawless. So when you're hiring humans, that's it.

After you go for the interview, come out of the interview, whether you're meeting with one person or a group of people, you've got to get the email address of every person you've met with. Send them an email, or send them an email saying I'm going to write a thank you note, but I just wanted to let you know thank you for meeting with me. Send it within 24 hours. It doesn't have to be exhaustive, but an email that says, thank you for meeting with me. I appreciate the opportunity. I look forward to meeting you again, and I'm very interested in this position, and I'd like my candidacy to move forward.

And you asked me question x and I gave you this answer. I'd like to expand upon the answer that I gave you. And that's a great thank you note because it shows real interest. Yes, ma'am.

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE] should you send an email thank you?

CHARLES CURTI: Yeah. Yeah. And you can say, I don't have your email address. May I send you a thank you note? And they may say, no, that's not-- but then at least you've indicated that you had the forethought.

So you're going to get my contact information, and you already have Elizabeth's. But I'm going to update this this afternoon because I forgot to include three things. I'm going to share with you the web address of InsideHigherEd.com. Or is it HigherEdJobs.com? HigherEdJobs.com, chronicleofhighereducation.com. And Ruth Molina's in the background, New England HERC.

ELIZABETH ANCARANA: Thanks, Chuck. We'll see you later.

[Vicki Burgoyne and Anthony Williams]

VICKI BURGOYNE: I just want to introduce myself. So I'm Vicki. I am the staffing specialist at MIT in Central Human Resources. The group that I support right now is information technology. But I have over eight years of experience recruiting. I have supported tons of searches at both Harvard and MIT in different areas. And can anybody hear me OK? OK, great. So I have experience recruiting marketing, finance, IT. And so I'll let Tony introduce himself, too.

ANTHONY WILLIAMS: Good morning. My name is Tony Williams. I'm the Senior Staff Specialist over at Central HR over at MIT, and this is my colleague and a former recruit of mine. So I'm very proud of her because I recruited her into this position.

Chuck did a remarkable job of explaining the entire process from beginning to end, about looking for a job, applying for a job, follow up. And the process between Harvard MIT is remarkably similar. As Vicki mentioned, she's a prior recruiter over here at Harvard. And I previously spent 16 years at Harvard before the last four at MIT.

So we are going to cover some of the things that are a little bit different about the process with regards to applying to MIT versus Harvard. But for the most part, you're going to find that the process is remarkably similar.

Just to kind of give you a broad overview of some of the things that are a little bit different about MIT, and maybe just a little bit about what makes us unique, is number one, just a little bit about our structure and the way the Institute is structured, and our overview with regards to the hiring process specifically.

So within central HR, Vicki and I are actually two of the four recruiters that are actually stationed within Central Human Resources. So of the four of us, we cover pretty much the entire Institute with regards to supporting various what we call DLCs, departments, labs, and centers.

These departments, labs, and centers may or may not have their own personnel officer. Sometimes they do have their own personnel officer, their own recruiter, depending on the size, the scope of the actual department, lab, or center. Occasionally these DLCs need our assistance in recruiting, in which case they call myself or one of my other three colleagues.

So when you apply for a position at MIT, it may be for a position that may or may not be supported by myself or any one of my three colleagues. Your resume may, in fact, may be going directly to that department, lab, or center, and their entire recruiting process may be centralized within that department. So they may have a hiring manager who is managing the process.

Other than that, for the most part, a lot of the process between hiring for Harvard and hiring at MIT is extremely similar as, once again, Chuck went over. Some of the departments that I cover are, for the most part, my most-- I would say the clients that keep me the busiest are I am actually the recruiter for Central HR. So you can imagine how challenging that might be when I'm responsible for finding and recruiting my own colleagues. But my department is actually my favorite client.

Some of the other departments I'm responsible for recruiting for are Department of Economics, what we call [INAUDIBLE]. The MIT Press is another client of mine. And again, like Vicki, I've recruited for every position imaginable, IT, communications, finance. And I think we have a video we're going to show. So we're just going to show you a quick video, just give you a little bit of the flavor of the culture of MIT. And then we'll go into talking a little bit about some of the jobs, the application process, and the functional areas.

[VIDEO PLAYBACK]

- At MIT, we tend to view the world a bit differently than most. Maybe it's our need to see past the obvious or our dissatisfaction with the status quo. Maybe we're just obsessed with asking the next question and solving the next problem.

Whatever the case, we believe that there's nothing in the world that can't be made better, stronger, cleaner, faster, smarter, more life-affirming, life-saving, life-improving.

So we discover, teach, ponder, and manage. We build, design, and explore. We invent, innovate, create, and cure. We apply science and we engineer the future because it is exploring and solving that moves us forward. It lifts us. It's what makes the world better. It's what makes us MIT.

[END PLAYBACK]

VICKI BURGOYNE: So of the things that we wanted to just point out is going directly to our website. So you can go to hr.mit.edu/careers. And we can send all of these links to Elizabeth, who can forward them out to everyone. But when you visit our website, you can scroll down. And in this section is resources that we have available, frequently asked questions about our hiring process.

So instead of kind of going through each of these, it might be a good idea to visit our website, take a look at the questions that are most relevant to you. Are there any questions that came up during Chuck's presentation that you wanted to ask now just to start the conversation so that we know where to target information? Yes.

AUDIENCE: How common is it-- Chuck mentioned he does passive recruiting. Is that something MIT does where you apply for one job, you might not hear back, but that resume may be looked at by a recruiter further down the road.

VICKI BURGOYNE: I would say that that happens very often. As colleagues, we share opportunities. We ask our colleagues, hey, do you know anyone for this particular role? And so we share passively candidates. Or if we meet someone that may not be a good fit for our role, we'll ask the candidate, are you OK if I share your application or your information with another colleague in a different department? And usually they'll say yeah, sure, please share that. So there is some passive informational sharing there going on. But I don't know if Tony--

ANTHONY WILLIAMS: Yeah, absolutely. In fact, we actually have a recruitment initiative right now going for some of our service members in the US military. And some of the passive sourcing that we're doing is to reach out to those who previously applied to MIT to actually invite them on campus for specific networking events that correspond with various job families for which we're recruiting at MIT. So absolutely, we do passive recruiting all the time, especially for difficult-to-fill positions and specialized skill sets. So absolutely we do that.

VICKI BURGOYNE: And that's also why it's important to make sure you keep in touch with the folks that you've interviewed. So even though you didn't get that role, maybe check in with them. You have their email address. Maybe email them three or four months later and say, hey, I really enjoyed meeting you a couple months ago. I know that you already filled this position. But I was

wondering if you had anything else that you might notice that my background might be a good fit for.

Or you can even reach out say, I saw these couple of positions on your website. Do you know if there's someone you can connect me to? I really enjoyed meeting you and your team.

So I think once you've had a conversation with someone, always try to keep back in touch with them, and LinkedIn is a great way, as Chuck had mentioned earlier.

ANTHONY WILLIAMS: And very often, if I meet a candidate or if I've interviewed a candidate for a position where it either wasn't a perfect fit but I thought that they were a great candidate, I'll ask them, is it OK if I keep you in mind for future positions, because I would very much like to stay in contact with you. And usually I'll send that person a LinkedIn invite, and almost actively look for a position for them if I think that they're that outstanding of a candidate. That happens more often than not. So yeah, absolutely, we do look for passive candidates.

AUDIENCE: Can I ask a question? What's common practice in recruiting for candidates or applicants in terms of timing? Is there a certain period of time, if you don't hear back-- either you didn't get called for a phone interview, or you didn't get called after the phone interview for the in-person interview-- like a certain period of time where the applicant or candidate gets a sense that even though I didn't get a declination or I didn't get a no, we're not pursuing your candidacy-- the searches take a long time in higher ed, so--

ANTHONY WILLIAMS: I would say just like Harvard, you're looking at about two to three months from the time the job is open to the time, say, an offer has been extended. So yes, it can be a while. And it really depends on the individual requisition, I have to say.

What we try to do is, if we're working with a department, lab, or center to fill a position, where if they're to the point where the job's been open for three months and they're not close to making an offer, we start looking at options to either modify and repost the job description, in which case all the applicants would be notified that this position has been canceled and reposted as requisition number ABCDE, or encourage them to make a hire, move on, or once again, make some changes to the requisition.

So I would say once you've reached that four-month mark, if you haven't heard anything, I would say the search has either stalled, there are plans to either repost the position, or there's an offer pending for another candidate. But I would say between that three- to four-months time, if you've checked in and/or you haven't heard back from anyone, which again, which is important stay in touch with folks to kind of check in and say, hey, I've applied for this position, what's the status on it, we can often tell you, well, this is where it is, and we think the position may be reposted. But yeah, I'd say between three to four months if you haven't heard anything by that time.

AUDIENCE: And on the other end of that spectrum, but relatedly, if somehow in your job search, you missed applying for a job that sounded really cool, and you only noticed that it was posted, but it's been posted for, say, a month, maybe two months, it's still open, but how do you know if it's alive or not? Is it worth my time to research and really write the good cover letter or not?

ANTHONY WILLIAMS: Great question. And thank you for asking that. Rule of thumb is if the job is posted and it's visible, it's still open. And please apply because what happens is to us, as recruiters on our end, is the job will be open. For the first three weeks we'll see an onslaught of applicants, and it's great. And this is terrific for us.

Then week four hits, and we're not getting any more applicants because people think, oh, well, they've probably already got someone in mind. It's been open for a month, or it's been open for two months, and then that really trails off for us. Meanwhile, the search is still ongoing for us.

Chuck mentioned that some requisitions for Harvard may get upwards of 400 applicants. We certainly try not to let that happen with our recs. It does happen occasionally, where you may see 170 to 200 recs for certain general administrative positions. But we really try to focus on quality versus quantity, I think.

So when folks are applying, just because 100 people have applied for that position and the job's been open for a month and a half, two months, doesn't mean we found the right candidate so far. So within our system, we actually have the option to take the posting down and remove it.

While the job may still be open and we may still be working on it, we can remove it from view so that we don't receive any more applicants. Usually that means we've got several good candidates in the pipeline and we're actually hoping to move forward with an offer soon. But if that job is still visible, it's fair game, so please apply.

AUDIENCE: As a follow-up to that question, I've often heard it's so important to be one of the first candidates to apply the second the job is posted. I'm getting the sense that's not the case.

ANTHONY WILLIAMS: So it's kind of a Catch-22 there. So that may be the case sometimes. I'm not going to lie. There are some times where once the job is posted, once again, we get the onslaught of applicants. And depending on the quality of applicants, if I get 100 applicants, and of the first 50 I review, 25 of them are fantastic, I'm probably going to focus on initially screening those first 25 in hopes of getting seven or eight that I'm looking to bring in for an in-person interview.

So unfortunately, if those seven or a work out and they're all amazing, I'm never going to have a chance to really go back and review the other 25 to 30 who may have applied a little bit later in the process. We do still love to, if at all possible, review as many applications as we possibly can because a lot of times, we'll have similar positions that we're trying to fill.

So if it's for, say, a project coordinator position or project manager position, if we get 100 applicants for that but we only really get through the first 50, we may have very similar positions that we have open. So we're constantly screening applicants for a match for other roles that either I may have opened or my other three colleagues may have opened.

AUDIENCE: It's kind of related. In terms of the cyclical nature, are there times in the calendar or academic year when a lot of jobs just come out and hit that people should kind of be prepared for those moments?

ANTHONY WILLIAMS: Well, according to our metrics, what we found is the calendar year is kind of on a bell curve. So in January, usually the number of postings we have are low. People are just coming off of vacation. Going into April, you'll start seeing them ramp up, and the numbers of open jobs that we have open start to ramp up through May, June, July, and it seems

to really peak right around July, August. As you get to September, October, November, December, it starts to trail off once again.

What I can suggest is you never know when the right job is going to come up for you. We just know what our metrics tell us. For the most part, we have an average of 300 to 400 open requisitions throughout the year. So there are times when hiring is more prolific, and we do have more job openings. I'd say anytime is a good time to apply because if there's an open job, and you apply in January or December, you may be applying when no one else is thinking about applying for a job, and that may get you in front of someone a lot sooner.

So I would say absolutely there is a cycle. But lately I think our numbers have been indicating it's almost more year round recruiting that we're doing more than anything. Did you have anything to add to that, Vicki?

VICKI BURGOYNE: Yeah, and I think it just depends on timing. So for some of my searches, if it's the summer time, a lot of folks go on vacation. So if you're applying for a position, you may not hear back for a couple weeks because the people that are reviewing resumes or interviewing are away.

So I hope that you don't get discouraged. It is a full-time job to search for a job. So we completely understand that. As soon as we find out how the hiring manager wants to proceed, we try to get back to candidates as soon as possible because we don't want them waiting around for the results if we already know we're not moving forward because we know you have other opportunities you're considering. So we try to be very mindful of your experience as a candidate, having been candidates ourselves. So the timing just really depends.

AUDIENCE: I know it's commonplace for, especially, academic positions, they have an internal candidate. But they want to show the search is open internationally, nationally, so they look for many other positions even though, I hate to say it, the fix may have been in. Does that also apply to administrative positions where there is already an internal candidate in mind, but you still post the job just to see who else may be out there. Is that commonplace?

VICKI BURGOYNE: So we always hire the most qualified person for the position. So if it is an internal that applies-- for example, maybe they are on the team already, and they have all the skills, not only the minimum qualifications listed, but the preferred qualifications-- then they are likely more to be hired. So it's hard for us to say because if there is someone internal that meets all the qualifications and is the most preferred, they're going to be the one that's hired.

So I guess that's my answer to that question. I hope that helps a little bit. Does that kind of get to where you're-- so it's hard to know if an internal applies, which is very common that internals will apply for the positions at MIT.

ANTHONY WILLIAMS: And I would also add just because there is an internal candidate who's interested in the position, once again, to reiterate what Vicki just said, we want to hire the best candidate, and sometimes that is not always the internal candidate.

So we kind of owe it to our clients, which are our candidates and everyone who applies to MIT, to give them a fair chance to apply for the position. And if the job is open, we're going to go through it just like we would any other requisition, and we're going to review the resumes, and we're going to consider everyone who applies.

It may happen that the external candidates who apply may not be as qualified as the internal candidate because the internal candidate may bring a certain level of institutional knowledge for that position that we feel is necessary. But if that's not the case, we absolutely will consider everyone.

And there are things that we can do on our end that we don't necessarily have to post a position, or post it for an extended period of time, if there's someone who we really want to promote into that role. But if it's posted and it's open and you've applied, we're absolutely going to continue to treat it like a normal requisition, normal opening.

AUDIENCE: Follow up to the follow up. I don't know, my HR colleagues from Harvard, if anyone can answer this question. Do we still say strong internal candidate if there is a SIC, a strong internal candidate? Maybe our HR folks-- they're coming for lunch. I know that. Do you

do that at MIT? Like if there is actually a strong internal candidate, is that posted in the description?

VICKI BURGOYNE: No, we don't. No.

ANTHONY WILLIAMS: I remember when Harvard did that.

AUDIENCE: Yeah. I just don't recall if we still-- yeah. Yeah. And one more question. A lot of our faculty partners and spouses have relocated a number of times with their partner, their academic partners. They're very resourceful, very flexible, have gotten really good work experience that might not come across in an obvious way in a resume as a clear trajectory. It might be different kinds of roles that weave together certain skill sets and experiences, but they're different. Do you have guidance for kind of putting that story together in writing?

VICKI BURGOYNE: Yes. I think Chuck sort of mentioned that earlier about having one resume. So my advice is have that one template that you work off of that lists everything that you've done. And then start taking things out that don't make sense or are not relevant to the position.

There was a question about the CV and having all the publications and the presentations. And while I think every recruiter has a different perspective-- so I encourage you to take all our advice with a grain of salt and do what's right for you and what's right for the position-- but in that case, if your presentations and the topics are not related to the job, it's probably not useful to keep all the presentations and the publications in the resume.

When you're trying to tell the story, I would tailor it to the job. And so maybe we can go into one of the jobs here on our website, and we can kind of talk about how we can tailor your resume to that. So I know that there are a couple of positions that people were looking at. But maybe we could just pull up something from the Alumni Association. I saw there were some folks that were interested in external relations and development.

ELIZABETH ANCARANA: And we've got about two minutes.

VICKI BURGOYNE: Oh, OK, we've got two minutes. So let me just look up-- so Senior Administrative Assistant. So when you're looking at a job description, it's really important what Chuck had said. Look at the minimum requirements. Sometimes it says some evening and weekend work will be necessary. Add that to the cover letter. That shows that you've read the job description carefully and that you are willing to work evenings and weekends.

Sometimes jobs will say must be able to lift 50 pounds because maybe there's some sort of physical component to it. Make sure that that's somewhere listed on your resume or cover letter to show that you are qualified for this role. And a lot of folks don't add those little details, and that's something that I think will help you stand out in an application.

And when you're telling the story of your work, you can group the years together if you've done a lot of part-time roles. And then use the interview to explain how you grouped things together. So that's more interview practice when you're telling the story.

But the resume should be a snapshot and sort of a marketing tool to show here's all my work experience. Here are the main responsibilities I have had. Going back to what Chuck said, competencies, right? So if you've done a lot of part-time roles that have a lot of writing in it, try to group all of that together to say provided marketing materials for over 16 different companies, or whatever that number is. So that kind of summarizes everything, and it quantifies things so that a recruiter knows exactly what your experience is and what the span of it is. Is that helpful at all?

ANTHONY WILLIAMS: And I would definitely say use the resume and cover letter to focus on what you do and what you do well because a skilled recruiter knows what core competencies that they're looking for for that particular role. So even though you may have had 10 or 12 different positions over the last 10 years, a skilled recruiter will be able to look at those 10 or 20 positions, what you've done, what you've done successfully, and be able to say, this person has the core competencies required to do this job. They have the required work experience. They have the basic qualifications. I'm going to reach out to them and have a conversation.

AUDIENCE: One more question. This might be a case for [INAUDIBLE]. Sorry, I'll be concise. Have you guys ever experienced reading a resume or something like this that had more

competencies that were needed for the job they were applying for? Has that ever happened to you? Like if somebody is-- I can't think of an example. It's not my case, but I'm just saying if-- I'm going to let you answer that.

AUDIENCE: Like overqualified?

AUDIENCE: Overqualified or differently qualified. For example, I have a PhD and have done some stuff. But when somebody is trying to change fields like I am, suddenly we have to go back. So have you ever thought that somebody-- I'm going to stop speaking and let you riff on that.

ANTHONY WILLIAMS: You can go ahead. I'm not quite sure.

VICKI BURGOYNE: So I guess it goes back to tailoring the resume to the job. And I think Chuck said don't do more than 10 years. I kind of disagree. So if a job requires 15 years, you obviously want to go back 15 years. And you can always summarize in one line to say, maybe you were a director for 10 years 10 years ago or 20 years ago. You can still put one line that says director from 1992 to whatever if you think it's going to bring value to the job that you're applying for.

Maybe for a senior administrative assistant, being a director is not going to be very in line with a senior administrative assistant role because here you are coordinating all staff reporting. Those are the things that you want to focus on. So I always encourage, tailor your resume to that job. So that means taking out things that are not relevant. So if you're PhD, you're welcome to put that there. But maybe it says high school diploma is required. Maybe just having the minimum. And you can always add that later if they ask you, or if you want to share that.

But whatever is relevant, most relevant, that's the information that should be on the resume and the cover letter to best market yourself for that job. And then you elaborate more when you're talking to someone. That's my opinion.

ELIZABETH ANCARANA: Great. Well, I think just in the interest of time, we should probably move on. But we will have time throughout the day to answer more questions. I know, Keith,

you have a question. We'll make sure we get to it. OK, great, thank you, Vicki and Tony, so much. It was excellent. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]