

BOOLE'S RULES **(If you DO use job boards, search wisely)**

While all job boards are different, the vast majority accept instructions that are based on a single set of rules. These rules were devised by a 19th century British mathematician by the name of George Boole. He established the logic by which factors are presented so that their relationship to one another can be clearly and accurately understood. In job databases, these factors are the characteristics you seek in your dream job.

For example, if you're looking for a facility manager position in the hospitality industry that pays a salary of \$200,000 and is located in Stamford, DC or Hartford, Md., Boolean rules will enable you to present those criteria so that the computer understands exactly what you want. Thanks to that clarity of expression, you can be sure that you won't waste a lot of time uncovering positions in which you are not interested or, even worse, overlook one or more positions in which you are.

The following list summarizes the most important Boolean rules. To get the best results from any specific job database, however, study its Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and use its online tutorial, if one is provided.

Rule #1. The characteristics (i.e., the individual words, terms or phrases) that you use to describe your dream job are called "key words" on the Internet. They are normally entered in all lower case letters because capitalization makes them cases sensitive. In other words, if you capitalize a key word, the computer will identify only those jobs where that word is capitalized. If you use all lower case letters, the computer will identify every job that contains the word, whether it is capitalized or not.

Rule #2. To link two characteristics together, both of which are required in your dream job, use the Boolean operator AND. Boolean operators are normally expressed in all capital letters. In the example above, you might use the following expression to tell the computer what kind of job you want: *\$200,000 AND hospitality*. This expression tells the computer that you want it to identify any job in its database that offers both characteristics. It must pay \$200,000, and it must be in the hospitality industry. If either one of those factors is missing, you do not want to see the job.

Rule #3. To tell the computer that the characteristic for which you are looking is a phrase rather than a single word, use quotation marks. For example: *"facility manager" AND \$200,000 AND hospitality*.

Rule #4. To link two characteristics together, either one of which is acceptable in your dream job, use the Boolean operator OR. For example, *Stamford OR "Hartford"*. Note that using capital letters with city or state names is acceptable as they are seldom expressed any other way.

Rule #5. To link two characteristics together when they are part of a longer set of characteristics, use parentheses. For example, *"facility manager" AND \$200,000 AND hospitality AND (Stamford OR "Hartford")*.

Rule #6. To account for the fact that different people use different terms to express the same idea, always include any synonyms of your characteristics and, wherever possible, use a Boolean operator called a wildcard.

To identify other terms that employers might use to describe the characteristics you seek in a job, review the vocabulary in their print employment ads. For example, you may find that some employers use the term Property Manager synonymously with Facility Manager. Hence, you should instruct the computer as follows: *("facility manager" OR "property manager") AND \$200,000 AND hospitality AND (Stamford OR "Hartford")*. Sometimes the variability in expression is simply a derivative of the same word. For example, an employer might use the term "facility management" to describe the "facility manager" job for which you're looking. The wildcard enables you to tell the computer to look for any and all terms that are based on the same root word. Hence, the term *"facility manage*"* (the asterisk is the wildcard) would tell the computer to find any job with a characteristic that is expressed as a derivative of the root word, manage.

Using Boolean expressions is a little like learning to speak pig Latin. It's not an elegant way to communicate, but it can convey information so that is accurate and comprehensible. Equally as important, anyone can do it, and with even a little practice, become expert enough to find their dream job and make it visible on the Web.