



# Eazl's Guide to Boolean Search

In this free reference, you'll find operators that you can use to refine your searches on almost all job boards and career websites, including LinkedIn, Indeed.com, and almost any other board with a search function. These operators can be used for companies, people (e.g. on LinkedIn), job announcements, and most of the other search fields on these sites. These operators can also be used on Google, Bing, Yahoo!, Baidu, etc.

## Boolean Search Operator: AND

The AND operator is inclusionary and thus limits your search. It should be used for targeting certain skills, experience, technologies, or titles that you would like to see in your search results. With every AND you add to your search you will typically see fewer search results. Here's an example of a search using the AND operator:

—> Software AND Medical AND Sunnyvale

## Boolean Search Operator: OR

The OR operator typically broadens your search results. Many people incorrectly think the Boolean OR operator is an either/or operator, when in fact it is not—it is technically interpreted as “at least one is required, more than one or all can be returned.” On most search websites it's best to use parentheses around OR statements. For example:

—> Software AND Medical AND (Texas OR Oregon)

One of the best ways to use OR statements is when a particular skill or function can be expressed in multiple ways, like this:



—> “HR Manager” OR “Human Resources Manager”

## Boolean Search Operator: NOT

The NOT operator excludes specific search terms and so the query will not return any results with that term (or terms) in them. For example, if you are searching for a hospital company, you may want to employ the NOT operator in order to eliminate some results. For example you might search things like:

—> software NOT Adobe

—> “Solutions Architect” NOT IBM

On LinkedIn and all of the major job boards, you can use the NOT operator in conjunction with an OR statement. Like this:

—> “Human Resources” NOT (HRIS OR “H.R.I.S.”)

If you were looking for people on LinkedIn, this search will not return any folks with HRIS (human resource information systems) in their title.

Note: You can use the minus sign as the NOT operator on many sites and search engines, including LinkedIn. So these two searches will yield the same results:

—> “Project Manager” NOT PMP

—> “Project Manager” -PMP

## Boolean Search Modifier: ASTERISK

The asterisk can be used on most job boards<sup>1</sup> as a root word/stem/truncation search. In other words, the search engine will return and highlight any word that begins with the root/stem of the word truncated by the asterisk.

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<sup>1</sup> Note: LinkedIn does not support the asterisk function.



For example, if you search:

—> admin\*

This will return: administrator, administration, administer, administered, etc.

Since LinkedIn does not support the asterisk, you will have to construct large OR statements to search for all of the various ways someone could mention each term you're searching for. For example, you might create this kind of search:

—> ("Hiring Manager" OR Sourcer OR Recruiter OR "Human Resources Generalist")

As a best practice, use parentheses to encapsulate OR statements for the search engines to execute them properly. Remember, the OR operator is interpreted as "I would like at least one of these terms."

## Boolean Search Modifier: PARENTHESIS

Think of parentheses as your way of telling the search engine you're looking for one of THESE: (\_\_\_\_\_). For example, you might search:

—> "New Delhi" (CFO OR "Chief Financial Officer" OR "C.F.O")

Quotation marks must be used when searching for exact phrases of more than one word, or else some search engines will split the phrase up into single word components. For example: "Recruiting Manager" will only return "Recruiting Manager." If you searched for Recruiting Manager without the quotation marks, it will split up the words Recruiting and Manager and highlight them as relevant matches even when not mentioned as an exact phrase.