

The Trick to More Productive Online Candidate Searches,

..... or

How 19th Century Math Rocks Your Search Results

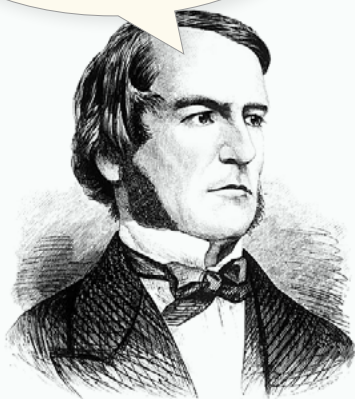
Introduction

Tired of ineffective web searches? Frustrated with all the time you waste trying to narrow your search to the most relevant results? Ready to play Ultimate Frisbee® with your Powerbook® if you see one more babbling breastfeeding blog rise to the top of your search for nursing professionals?

Chin up, Ms. and Mr. Recruiter. With a few simple tactics found in Boolean Search, you'll soon be able to pare away the irrelevancies, hone in on the most pertinent search results, and ferret out the finest candidates with ease.

POP QUIZ!

(HOTSHOT)



The word “Boolean” refers to:

- a. A simple South American people, living on a diet of rice and old shoes.¹
- b. An Ivy League football cheer.
- c. A 96% fat-free slice of Boo.
- d. A type of search term logic named after 19th century mathematician George Boole

Yep, way back in the mid-1800's a guy named George Boole somehow foresaw the problem you'd have with irrelevant search results, and came up with an elegant solution we now call Boolean Search. (Although truthfully he just called it, “*A party trick I use to get babes.*”)

Boolean Search is technically based in algebraic logic, but you don't need to know that. All you need to do is memorize this simple formula:

$$\text{mes} \left\{ x \in \mathbb{R} \mid \Re \frac{1}{\pi} \sum \frac{a_k}{x - b_k} \geq t \right\} = \frac{\sum a_k}{\pi t}$$

* for any real numbers $a_k > 0$, b_k , and $t > 0$

¹Thanks and apologies, Groucho

Okay, just kidding. This was another of Boole's work, a formula called "Boole's identity." It's got nothing to do with Boolean search, but it seemed like a good way to prove he was a pretty smart guy. No wonder he was able to solve Internet search well over a century before Al Gore invented the dang thing.

The Boolean search method is actually based on employing a few simple modifiers along with your search terms. Done correctly, it can help you find the most qualified candidates to fill your open positions. Which is a good thing.

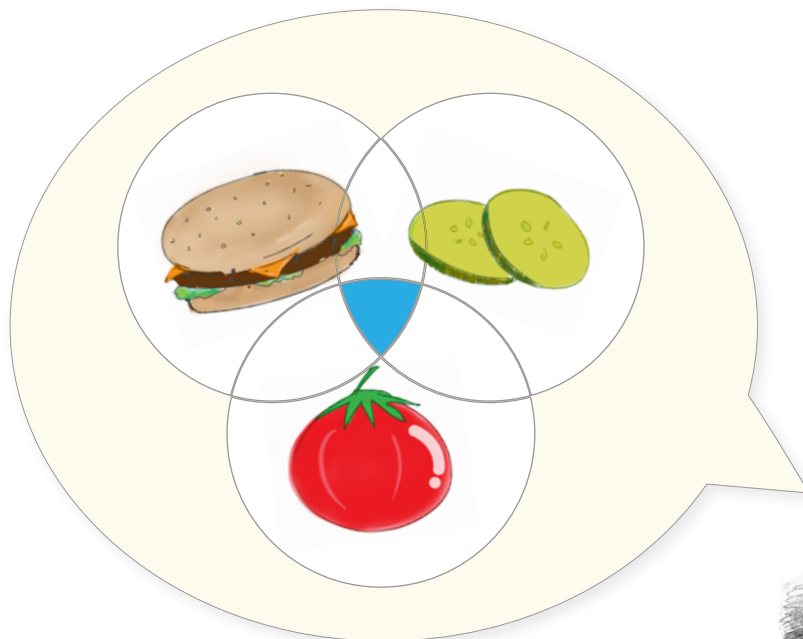
So let's get to it.

Chapter 1: “and”

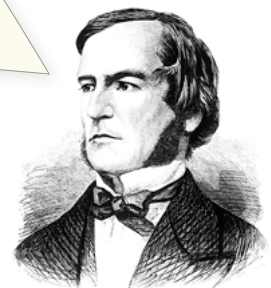
As you might surmise, the word AND calls for inclusion.

In search lingo, this means you don’t want to receive any results unless ALL key terms and phrases are found within the result. Logically then, the more times you use AND in your search, the lower the volume of results you’ll receive.

For instance, if you ordered a cheeseburger with tomato and pickles—and you didn’t want a cheeseburger any other way—you’d order it this way, Boolean-style:



—GIMME CHEESEBURGER **AND** PICKLES **AND** TOMATO



If George Boole himself were dishing up your chow, you would only receive a cheeseburger garnished with tomato and pickles. It would be impossible to receive one without one or the other. (It should be noted that, in this instance, George would be happy to include any number of other goodies on your burger; all you directed him to do was make sure your cheeseburger had tomato and pickles. You didn’t say it couldn’t have onions. But we’ll get to this in a minute).

Let's look at a more relevant example of using the inclusive "AND."

EXAMPLE

You're recruiting a registered nurse with operating room experience. So, you type this in:

nurse practitioner **AND** operating room **AND** travel

This search will only pull up results with all sets of words in the profile or dataset. So you won't see any nurse practitioners who don't also have operating room experience, and you won't see any nurse practitioners with operating room experience unless they also travel. However, in this example you might also have received "nurse" listings that don't include "practitioner," and vice versa.

So, you could have searched:

nurse **AND** practitioner

And you would have only received results for profiles specifically self-identifying as nurse practitioners. If you search:

nurse practitioner **AND** operating room **AND** California

You'll get a list that narrows down your candidates to California residents. And so on.

Easy enough? Let's move on from an inclusionary term to an exclusionary term. Here's where we can tell George to lay off the onions.

Chapter 2: “not”

NOT is a search modifier that helps you filter out unwanted and/or irrelevant information that might be linked to your search terms. In effect, you’re telling the search engine, “Please, don’t give me any candidates with this in their data set.”

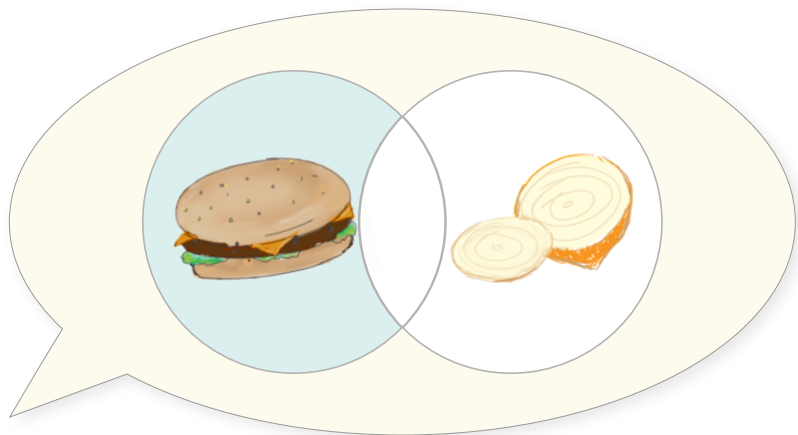
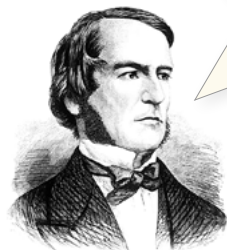
EXAMPLE

You’re looking for a hospital administrator, but you don’t want to see anyone who worked for Discount Medical Miracles R’Us. For obvious reasons. So, you type:

hospital administrator **NOT** Discount Medical Miracles R’Us

Now you’ll only receive a list of hospital administrators who never worked—or at least, won’t admit to having worked—at Discount Medical Miracles R’Us.

NOTE: This same function can be done using an em dash “—”. Don’t ask why, just accept it and wonder, as we do, why simply typing “NOT” isn’t good enough.



-GIMME CHEESEBURGER **NOT** ONIONS

Chapter 3: “and not”

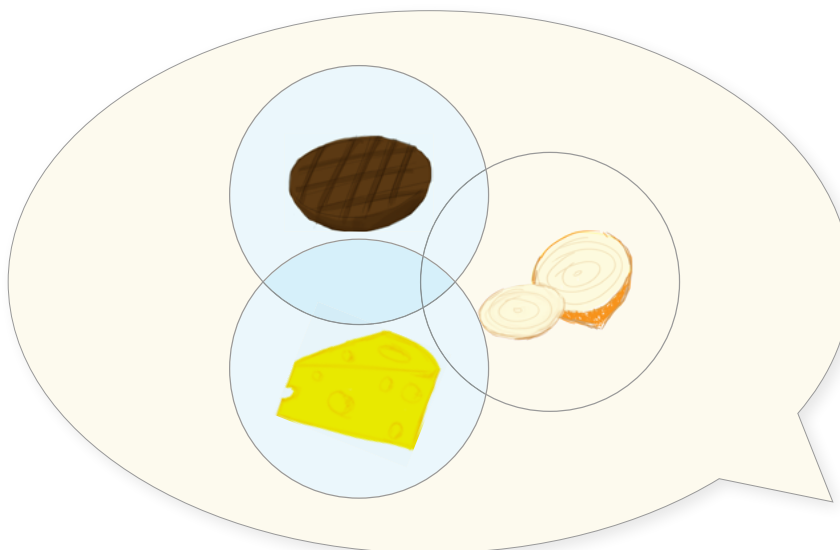
Feeling cocky about your search skills? Want to narrow things down even more? Use the search modifier, “AND NOT,” which eliminates results associated with any one of the search terms.

EXAMPLE

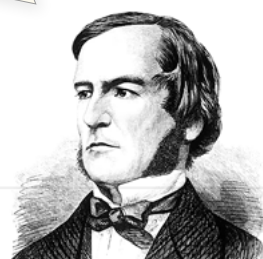
You’ve got an open position for a travel nurse, but your initial search came back with a lot of operating room nurses who travel. But you’re not looking for an operating room nurse, so here’s what you do:

nurse AND travel **AND NOT** operating room

This search would show all potential candidates who have identified themselves as nurses who travel, but will not include any travel nurses with operating room experience.



BEEF PATTY AND CHEESE **AND NOT** ONIONS-



4. “or”

Chapter

So maybe you’ve gone a little mad with your newfound filtering power, and you’re starting to get results that are too specific. You can expand your search, effectively casting a wider net, with the modifier, “OR.”

“OR” allows the search engine to include results matching either of the terms or phrases on either side of the “OR.” The more terms you connect by “OR,” the more results are likely to appear.

EXAMPLE

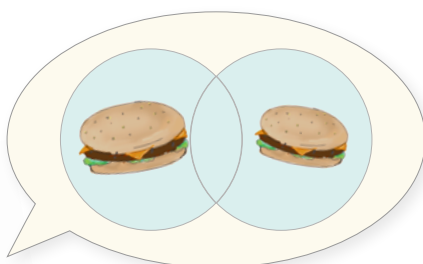
You’re looking for a technical writer, a position that is frequently dubbed “tech writer.”

technical writer **OR** tech writer

You’ll get all the listings for writers who have self-identified as either one. Now, what if you wanted to expand it even more, to see if you could find someone with a little more experience but who still considers themselves a technical writer? You could try:

technical writer **OR** tech writer **OR** technical editor **OR** tech editor

Now you’d get technical writers who also self-identify as editors; maybe they’ve taken on additional responsibilities at their current job, or did some freelance technical editing. Whatever may be the case, you’ve thrown a wider net in your search for the tech writer with the potential to be a tech editor.



-GIMME CHEESEBURGER **OR** BURGER WITH CHEESE



Chapter 5: “()”

Remember your algebra? First solve the parenthetical, then the equation? No worries, we don’t either, but don’t sweat it. Your search engine does it by default.

Parentheses come into play for more advanced searches, where you’re employing multiple phrases and specific criteria. As noted, the search engines will assign priority to anything within the parentheses.

Important: Parentheses must be used to join group terms connected by more than one Boolean command. (Don’t hurt yourself trying to figure that sentence out, it’ll become clear in our excellent examples to follow).

EXAMPLE

You’re interested in hiring an employee who has 10+ years experience as a manager or director in the accounting sector of the convalescent care or hospice industries. Start with a general, wide-ranging search:

```
accounting AND (manager OR director)
```

You’ll get a sizeable number of results. So, let’s narrow it down, still using parentheses.

```
accounting (manager OR director) AND (convalescent care OR hospice)
```

You’ll get managers or directors who have either convalescent care or hospice care experience. Want to take it a step further? Maybe you’re particularly interested in someone who worked at, say, Kaiser Permanente. Here’s what you could do:

```
accounting (manager OR director) AND (convalescent care OR hospice) AND  
Kaiser Permanente
```

You’ll get results with the same parameters as before, but only if they have worked for (or still work for) Kaiser Permanente.

Final Word

As you put the Boolean Search logic into action, it's important to remember that, while time-consuming, searching is cheap, and forgiving. Make a mistake, just do it again. No one will know but you.

Also, consider leveraging new software that simplifies the search process and dramatically improves cost efficiency by reducing the time you spend showcasing your mad Boolean skills.

Identified Recruit is extremely user-friendly software that enhances the efficacy of your search by “normalizing” the wacky, chaotic profile data that medical professionals tend to use on Facebook. So, instead of you spending hours guessing all the ways a neo-natal nurse might refer to herself in her profile, Identified Recruit does it for you, and in seconds returns results that are coherent, organized, and immediately actionable.

Put simply and non-politically-correctly, we took Boolean Search logic, fed it a steady diet of HGH, amphetamines, and Essence of Sherlock Holmes, and set it loose on the massive Facebook database. Its robust functionality means it'll find candidates you might never have happened on, simply because you couldn't possibly guess at all the self-identifiers people use in their profiles.

For more information on Identified Recruit, just [click here](#).

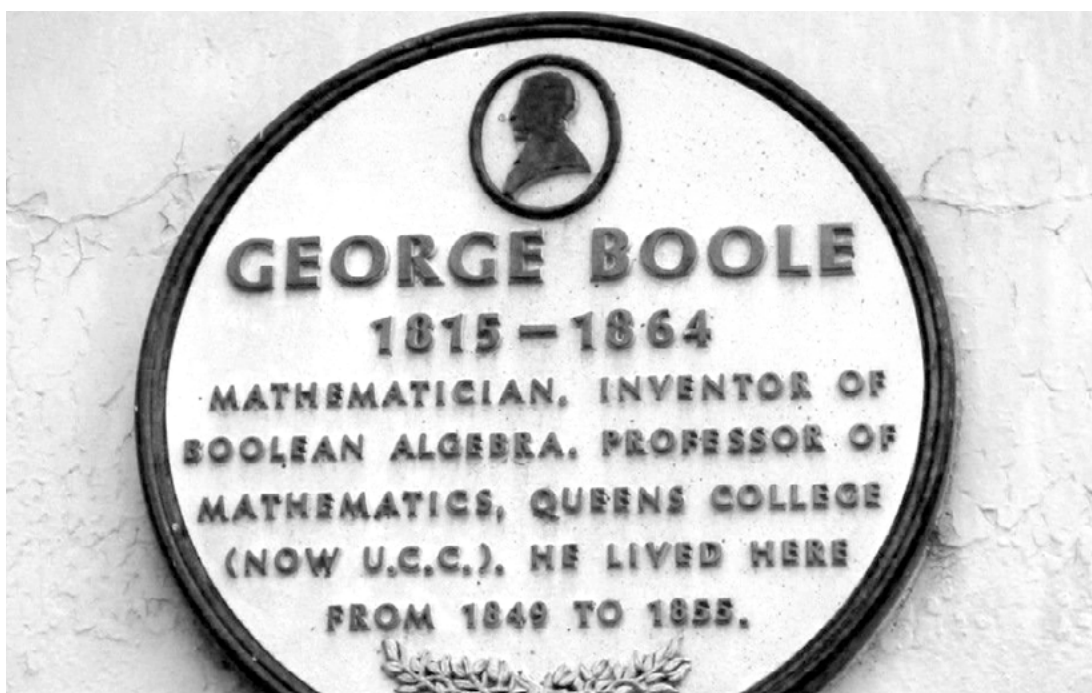


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