

The team I am critiquing today is group 2. Their research question is - "How to make job search less stressful for graduate students." As a graduate student, I understand how stressful the job search experience can be. I think it's pretty cool that group 2 decided to explore that area. The research methods used by them were as follows: -

Shop along: They asked their research participants to perform a job search online and observed them as they went ahead.

Survey: They sent out a survey asking for inputs about their job search online.

In their shoes: - They performed a job search online by themselves to understand the exact feeling.



After performing these activities, they arrived at multiple challenge statements. The main challenge statement to which they are trying to ideate, and prototype is as follows:

"How might we indicate to applicants the status of their application(s), helping seekers to manage offers and deadlines and when they will hear back about each of their applications, thus reducing the anxiety of searching?"



A couple of companies are trying to improve the job search experience for their customers—LinkedIn, Glassdoor and Indeed, to name a few. One feature these websites lack is the process of tracking the progress of the student's application. Group 2 assumes that application tracking is something that can be published on these sites. But it's a lot trickier than it seems at first. For this idea to work, the hiring company and their HR team need to update these details for all the people interviewing with them. This can be seen as a significant overhead by the team as the process of conducting these interviews can be a primary task.

The researchers conducted their research in a limited time due to limitations. This is a disadvantage because it can be challenging to gauge the holistic view. Job search takes place over a more extended period. This can't be limited to just one sitting or over a week. Most students start their job search during the fall semester, and most don't get placed in a company until the end of the spring semester. In a few exceptional cases, the student may have to wait for a certain period even after his course completion to get that perfect job. Many students apply for

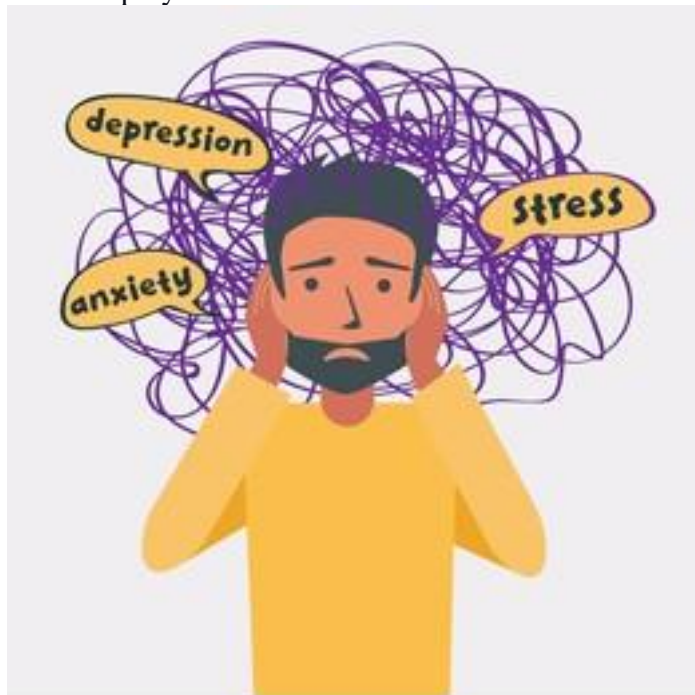
over 100-150 companies and never hear back from them. Observing the student throughout this whole time would require a lot of patience and give us multiple insights, letting us uncover topics and pain points that weren't obvious to us in research that was conducted in a week.

Their research assumes that the main trouble of job search is the application process, but this need not be true for all the participants. In my personal experience, I have more problems trying to make a connection with a hiring company. This step comes before the process of application. But moving to the positive side and looking at the advantages of having this information on the website, I can see how this can benefit everyone, not just college students. Job seeking is considered one of the most stressful experiences for everyone. So, their persona can be updated to the public apart from college students.



How would I build up on their idea of having a website that lets people track their interview application progress? To start, I would like to include a feature that details each interview round ahead of them and find data about recruitment procedures and timelines. For most technical jobs, an interviewee might have to go through multiple coding or technical rounds. They might also face managerial rounds. If this information were made available before the following interview, it would give the interviewee enough time to prepare for the same accordingly. During the ideation phase, I would also consider adding more details about the interview process. There could also be a portal where people who went through the entire interview process can post about their experience and mention all the questions they asked. This would give insights and help them prepare for the interview more confidently and with self-assurance. I would go back to collect data during the search to see how vital the salary field was to these job seekers. Glassdoor and Levels.fyi provides some information about the salary for each role in a company. This feature can be added and incorporated on this website too. This way, job seekers don't have to visit multiple websites during their search. Hence, reducing stress and anxiety. The applicants can gain insider information and better understand how long they need to wait at different phases.

Adding details regarding the company by the employer can also sometimes be a disadvantage. Human beings tend to be biased while making such decisions. Leaving the site with information that could either be sugar-coated and made to seem perfect, or the site could have reviews that are entirely out of context. Moreover, this prototype expects the returning user to enter details about their current professional life. Some people may find this a privacy issue. Not everyone would want to share information regarding their employer. It's a human tendency to avoid awkward situations like these. So, when a website prompts them to enter such details, they might feel triggered and never revisit the site. These problems can easily be mitigated with two options. One could be given the option to bypass these checks or questions. Furthermore, students don't have details regarding their previous employer. Asking them to enter such information would add no value. Having an option to bypass students would also be a bonus. The second approach would be to give incentives to the users who do update or add these details. This way, they would be motivated to return and keep their profile up to date with their latest employment information.



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All the information stored on this website will be user-added. Hoping that more information is gathered from different applicants, future applicants can better understand where they are right now. Implementing a thorough fact-checking system would benefit the website immensely. Applicants can divulge the details of their application process, such as when they got rejected or moved to the next stage. Employees may have details about their interview experience alone, so when they upload these components, they will be precise about their understanding. Any company would have multiple teams, and each may behave differently during the interview process. Some groups may take five rounds to finish the entire process, and some may take 3.

This detail may not be evident to the employer. So, when they update the information on the website, the person seeking help could be misled or misguided.

To summaries, the prototype has a lot of potential for improvement. It is jam-packed with multiple features, which can be very useful for any student's job search. Knowing where exactly their application it can help relieve the stress of any job seeker.