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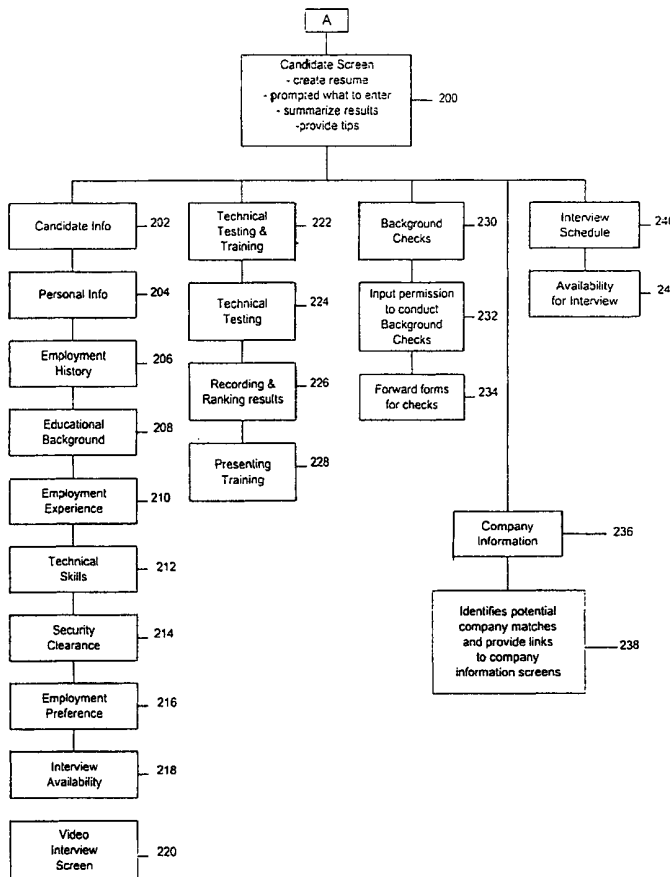
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(54) Title: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR MATCHING A CANDIDATE WITH AN EMPLOYER



(57) Abstract: A system and method for matching employers and candidates is described. A candidate may provide candidate information to create a candidate summary (200). Further, a candidate may be tested on technical skills (224), where the results of the tests are scored and recorded (226), and the candidate is offered skill training based on the results of the tests (228). A candidate may further authorize background checks to be performed (230), and may note interview availability (241). Employer may input employer criteria for selecting a candidate (236), and candidate summaries may be presented to the employer, allowing the employer to review information about a candidate. Employers may designate the importance of various employer criteria categories, thereby rating candidates. An employer may arrange an interview with a candidate through the present invention, where engaging a candidate and transmitting employment contract documents between the employer and the candidate is facilitated.



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SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR MATCHING A CANDIDATE WITH AN EMPLOYER

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates generally to matching a candidate and an employer based on candidate information and employer criteria, and more particularly to presenting a match via an internet connection and facilitating an employment agreement between an employer and a candidate.

Background of the Invention

Matching employers and candidates is an ongoing process. Employers work to find candidates to fill positions for a variety of reasons, including retirement of current employees, expansions of the employer's business, or employees leaving for various reasons. Candidates may be searching for employment for various reasons, including dissatisfaction with a current job, new skills, changing career or termination of a previous job.

One known method for matching a candidate with an employer comprises posting a resume, such as physically posting a resume or posting the resume on the internet. Resume posting, however, may suffer from the drawback of containing limited information. A resume will contain only the information supplied by the candidate. Some information, such as the level of skill in certain areas, may not be quantifiable on a conventional resume posting. Further, a candidate may not receive feedback regarding skills and information on the resume, including any deficiencies noted by employers or suggestions to improve skills.

Another method for matching candidates and employers may comprise an employer listing vacant jobs, such as physically listing job opportunities with an employment agency or posting jobs to an internet website. Posting job listings, however, may suffer from the drawback that an employer has no control over candidates who apply. This may lead to candidates applying who lack the requisite skills for a job, thus causing the employer to incur increased cost in filling a particular job. Additionally an employer or human resource department must facilitate interaction with the candidate,

such as setting up an interview and exchanging contractual documents between the employer and the candidate.

These and other drawbacks exist.

5 **Summary of the Invention**

An object of the present invention is to overcome these and other drawbacks in existing systems and methods.

Another object of the invention is to provide a system and method for proactively matching a candidate and an employer.

10 Another object of the invention is to provide a system and method for creating a resume to assist a candidate in obtaining employment.

Another object of the invention is to provide a system and method for testing candidate skills and providing a candidate training based on candidate selections or results of testing.

15 Another object of the invention is to provide a system and method for facilitating an interview between an employer and a candidate by creating a schedule to arrange a real-time interview, or by preparing a taped interview.

Another object of the invention is to provide a system and method for presenting candidates to an employer based on predefined employer criteria.

20 Another object of the invention is to provide a system and method for facilitating employment negotiations between an employer and a candidate by assisting in candidate engagement and presenting employment contract documents

Another object of the invention is to provide a system and method for quantifying candidate information and calculating a quantitative candidate rating for determining if a
25 candidate qualifies for an employer's position.

These and other objects of the invention are accomplished according to various embodiments of the invention. According to an embodiment of the invention, a candidate may provide candidate information, including personal information, employment history, educational background, employment experience, technical skills,
30 employment preference, interview availability, and other information and may video tape an interview. A candidate may be tested on technical skills, where the results of the test

are scored and recorded, and the candidate is offered skill training based on the results of the test. A candidate may further authorize background checks to be performed, and may indicate interview availability.

According to another embodiment of the invention, an employer may input
5 employer criteria for selecting a candidate, including candidate information, including personal information, employment history, educational background, employment experience, technical skills, employment preference, and interview availability. Candidate summaries may be presented to the employer, allowing the employer to review information about a candidate. An employer may then view an interview schedule for a
10 candidate and offer a candidate an interview. A system and method according to the present invention may facilitate an employer engaging a candidate and transmitting employment contract documents between the employer and the candidate.

According to another embodiment of the invention, an employer may rank the importance of search criteria for rating a candidate and may designate a rating level for a
15 candidate. Candidate information may be received and quantified, and a candidate rating may be calculated based on the ranked search criteria and the quantified candidate information. Candidates whose ratings meet the designated level may be presented to an employer.

Other objects and advantages exist for the present invention.

20

Brief Description of the Drawings

Figures 1A-1C are flowcharts for the presentation of web pages for matching a candidate and an employer according to an embodiment of the invention.

Figure 2 is a flowchart for searching for a candidate according to an embodiment
25 of the invention.

Figure 3 is schematic diagram of a system for matching a candidate and an employer according to an embodiment of the invention.

Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments

30 The present invention is described in relation to matching employers and candidates in an internet environment. Nonetheless, the parameters and characteristics

described herein may be applicable to other interactions between employers and candidates and in other mediums.

Figures 1A-1C illustrate a flow chart for methods for presentation of web pages for matching a candidate and an employer according to a embodiments of the invention.

5 Figure 1A discloses that a user, such as a candidate or an employer, may access Main Screen 100. Main Screen 100 may comprise various information about the system and the sponsor of the system, which may be presented on a screen in a known manner. Banners, advertisements and text information may be presented on Main Screen 100 to inform a user. According to an embodiment of the invention, a user may access, as applicable, Employer Screen 300 or Candidate Screen 200 from Main Screen 100. Access to Employer Screen 300 or Candidate Screen 200 may be obtained through a secured access such as a user ID and password as may be conventional in the internet field. Thus, according to an embodiment of the invention, Main Screen 100 may prompt a user to sign up as a candidate or as an employer. The user may be prompted to select a password and user identification to allow access to appropriate portions of the system. Other methods for user access may also be used.

Figure 1B illustrates a flowchart of the presentation of various screens associated with a candidate. Candidate Screen 200 may prompt a candidate to create or enter a summary, including prompting the candidate to enter certain information, summarizing various results associated with the information and providing tips to a candidate. By way of example only, tips may include prompting a candidate to use certain words, such as active verbs rather than passive verbs, indicating what skills an employer is looking for, or other tips. A candidate may access Candidate Info Screen 202 where a candidate may be prompted to provide information. Providing candidate information may result in developing a summary for a candidate, where the candidate summary may be viewed by employers to determine a candidates fitness for a particular job.

Personal Information Screen 204 may prompt a candidate to provide personal information, including name, address, social security number, date of birth and other information. Employment History Screen 206 may prompt a user to provide history about previous employment, including the dates of employment at a previous job, the

name and address of previous employers the reason for leaving employment and other information related to employment history.

Educational Screen 208 may prompt a candidate to provide information about the candidates educational background including colleges and universities attended, the dates
5 of attendance, degrees earned, grade point average, college activities and other information related to a candidates educational background.

Employment Experience Screen 210 may prompt a candidate to provide information about various types of employment, jobs or projects the candidates has worked on. This information may include describing the types of work performed,
10 explaining specific projects a candidate has been involved in and the outcome of those projects, and a candidates level of involvement in a project. Other employment experience information may also be provided.

Skill Screen 212 may prompt a candidate to provide information about skills of the candidate. Skill information may include computer programming or processing
15 experience, typing skills, drafting skills, certification in various skills, such as accounting or medical procedures, or any other type of skill which may be related to or desirable for a particular type of employment. Security Clearance Screen 214 may prompt a candidate to provide information about security clearances granted in previous jobs, including the level of security clearance, government clearances, the dates of such clearance and other
20 security information. Other information about security clearances may also be provided by a candidate.

Employment Preference Screen 216 may prompt a candidate to enter information about employment preferences, including indicating the desired employment location, salary, size of the company, position, amount of travel, supervision of or by others, or
25 other information about employment preferences.

Interview Availability Screen 218 may prompt a candidate to provide a schedule of availability for interviews. This schedule may include dates, times, and locations for availability for a desired interview. Other information about interview availability may also be provided.

30 Video Interview Screen 220 may prompt a candidate to create a taped video interview. According to an embodiment of the invention a candidate may be presented

with a series various questions and may be videotaped while answering the questions. The video tape may be saved and a potential employer may access the videotape while determining if the candidate is suitable for the employment position.

From Candidate Screen 200 a candidate may select to enter Technical Testing and Training Screen 222. Technical Testing and Training Screen 222 may offer one or more tests to a candidate to gauge the candidates skill level. Testing may include determining a candidates skill level in various skills such as computer programming or processing, typing, proficiency in certain professional skills such as accounting skills or medical procedures or other types of testing. Training may involve aiding a candidate in improving skills.

Testing Screen 224 may prompt a user to be tested in a particular skill. Testing may involve prompting a candidate to answer various questions to indicate knowledge in a particular subject. Testing further may include timing a candidate on various skills, such as words typed per minute or data processing and entry. According to an embodiment of the invention, testing may be presented directly through the system of the present invention. According to another embodiment of the invention, testing may be presented through third parties, such as through other training systems. Other types of testing may also be used.

Recording and Ranking Results Screen 226 may store a particular candidates testing results and rank them according to various criteria. Results may be stored in a conventional manner, such as in a database or other storage manner. Rankings may be calculated in comparison to a nationwide average, to candidates who have used the system previously, to candidates within a particular geographic area such as a city or state, or other methods of ranking. Rankings and results may be added to a candidate's summary. Other manners of recording and ranking may also be used.

At Presenting Training Screen 228, a candidate may be presented training options based on the results of technical testing. By way of example only, a candidate may be tested in two technical areas. Results of the testing may indicate a superior ranking in a first skill and a below average ranking in a second skill. A candidate may be presented with training options directed toward improving the second skill. According to an embodiment of the invention, training may be directly offered to a candidate through the

system of the present invention. A candidate may select a particular skill and receive training directly. According to another embodiment of the invention, training may be offered through third parties. A candidate may select a particular skill and be presented information about receiving the training from an appropriate third party. Other manners
5 for presenting training may also be used.

From Candidate Screen 200, a candidate may enter Background Check Screen 230. A candidate may be prompted to provide information and permission for background checks to be performed on the candidate. At Input Screen 232 a candidate may input permission to conduct various background checks. Background checks may
10 include criminal background checks, employment background checks, credit background checks and other background checks associated with a candidate. At Forwarding Screen 234, candidate permission may be forwarded to appropriate parties to perform the checks. According to an embodiment of the invention, permission may be forwarded directly to the appropriate party, such as a credit bureau or a police station. According to
15 another embodiment of the invention permission may be forwarded to a third party, such as a private investigator, who may then contact appropriate parties, such as credit bureaus or police stations, to perform the background checks. Other manners of providing a background check and permission may also be used.

From Candidate Screen 200, a candidate may access Company Information
20 Screen 236 and may receive information about various companies. Company information may include the name of a company, the number of employees, the location of offices, the type of work performed, clients of the company, and other company information of interest to a candidate. At Match Screen 238 a candidate may be presented with various companies that match a candidate criteria and may be provided
25 links to information screens associated with a particular company. Candidate criteria may be based on candidate information, or may be separately designated by a candidate. Other manners for providing company information may also be used.

From Candidate Screen 200, a candidate may access Interview Setup Screen 240. A candidate may elect to set up an interview for a specific date, time and location at
30 Availability Screen 242. At Availability Screen 242, a candidate may indicate availability for a particular interview(s). According to an embodiment of the invention,

one or more interviews may be offered to a candidate and a candidate may indicate availability for an interview. According to another embodiment of the invention, a candidate may create a schedule of availability indicating what times, dates, and locations a candidate would be available for an interview. Based on this schedule, interviews may
5 be presented to a candidate. Other manners for setting up interviews may also be used.

Figure 1C illustrates a flowchart for an employer to use a system and method according to the present invention. At Employer Screen 300, an employer may designate certain employer criteria and search for candidates which meet the employer criteria.

From Employer Screen 300, an employer may access Candidate Search Screen
10 302. At Candidate Search Screen 302, an employer may designate various criteria for a potential candidate. Criteria may include personal information, employment history, educational background, employment experience, skills, security clearance, employment preferences, interview availability and other information which may be of interest to an employer. Based on employer criteria, candidate summaries may be presented to an
15 employer at Candidate Summary Screen 304. An employer may view summaries of each candidate to determine which candidate would best fit a job opening. Summaries may include candidate information, videotaped interviews or other information.

At Interview Schedule Screen 310, an employer may be prompted to view an interview schedule for a candidate. According to an embodiment of the invention an
20 employer may offer an interview based on a candidate's interview schedule. According to another embodiment of the invention, an employer may offer an interview directly to a candidate. At Candidate Engagement Screen 312, engagement between an employer and a candidate may be facilitated. Engagement may comprise facilitating an in-person interview, assisting in a video conference interview, assisting in an online, real-time chat
25 interview or other types of engagements. Facilitation may comprise providing the physical equipment (*e.g.*, a place for an interview, a connection for an interview, *etc.*), or other types of facilitation.

At Contract Document Screen 314, an employer may be able to provide contract documents to a candidate and exchange these documents with a candidate to facilitate an
30 employer entering into an agreement with a candidate to become an employee. Documents may include an actual employment contract, various attachments to the

employment contract and/or documents pertaining to an employers benefits such as health, retirement, savings, stock options and the like. Other documents may also be used.

From Employer Screen 300, an employer may directly view Interview Schedule
5 310. According to an embodiment of the invention, after having reviewed various candidates, an employer may enter Employer Screen 300, and directly enter Interview Schedule 310 to set up an interview with a desired candidate.

From Employer Screen 300, an employer may enter Job Listing Screen 306. At
Job Listing Screen 306, an employer may provide a list of current job openings. Job
10 listings may be available to candidates to provide information about areas that an employer is interested in filling. Information about job listings may include the location of the job, the work to be performed and the necessary skills a candidate should have. Other information may also be posted on a Job Listing Screen 306.

An employer may also access Corporate Profile Screen 308 from Employer
15 Screen 300. Corporate Profile Screen 308 may provide information about an employer such as the name of the employer, the location of various offices of the employer, the number of employees, the type of work that is done, clients of the employer, and other information which may be pertinent to a candidate. According to an embodiment of the invention a corporate profile is available for viewing by a candidate. Other manners of
20 providing corporate information may also be used.

According to another embodiment of the invention, an employer may designate
the relative importance of search criteria for rating and selecting a candidate. Searching
for a candidate may be performed in the context of Match Module 420. Fig. 3 is a
flowchart of steps for performing a search for a candidate according to an embodiment of
25 the invention. An employer is presented with a list of employer criteria categories at step 500. At step 502, an employer ranks employer criteria categories, and indicates a rating level for receiving information regarding a candidate at step 504. Candidate information is received at step 506, and a candidate rating is calculated at step 508. At step 510, candidate ratings are reviewed to determine if any candidates meet a rating level. If at
30 least one candidate meets a designated rating level, an employer is presented with information about the candidate or candidates at step 512. If no candidates meet a rating

level, an employer is informed at step 514. The rating method ends at step 516. Fig. 3 will now be described in greater detail below.

At step 500, an employer is presented with a plurality of employer criteria categories (or “categories”). Employer criteria categories may be categories for various employer criteria, such as skill set requirements, experience, personal preferences, test results, or other employer criteria categories. A skill set category may comprise various skills in which a candidate demonstrates proficiency and which may be of interest to an employer. Skills may include typing, word processing, computer programming or processing, spreadsheets, certification in various skills (*e.g.*, medical certificates, financial certification, *etc.*) drafting skills, licenses (*e.g.*, radiology license, teaching license, *etc.*), data entry or any other type of skill which may be related to or desirable for a particular type of employment. Other types of skills may also be included in a skill set category.

An experience category may comprise the experience of candidate in a particular field, or in related fields. An employer may indicate that experience is desired in certain fields. By way of example, an employer may be seeking a candidate for a sales position for electric motors. The employer may specify that experience in sales and/or electrical engineering is desired for a position. When providing information for employer criteria, a candidate may indicate, where applicable, experience in the designated fields. Other types of experience may also be included in an experience category.

A personal preference category may comprise preferences designated by a candidate. Personal preferences may comprise salary range, location, position, responsibilities, amount of travel, size of company, supervision of or by others, or other preferences a candidate may indicate. Other types of preferences may also be included in a preference category.

A testing category may indicate the result(s) of a test or tests a candidate has taken. Test may be presented by a system according to an embodiment of the invention, or may be presented by a third party. Tests may include prompting various questions for a candidate to answer, timing a candidate on various skills, such as words typed per

minute or data processing and entry, or other types of testing. Other types of tests may also be included in a test category.

At step 502, an employer ranks employer criteria categories. According to an embodiment of the invention, rankings of employer criteria categories may indicate the relative importance of the categories. An employer may indicate that some employer criteria categories are more important than other employer criteria categories. According to an embodiment of the invention, an employer may rank employer criteria categories sequentially. By way of example, an employer may assign five employer criteria categories ranks of one through five, *e.g.*, the most important category is assigned a five, the second most important category is assigned a four, *etc.*)

According to another embodiment of the invention, ranking employer criteria categories may comprise assigning relative weights to the categories. The weights may add to a particular number, such as providing fractions as weights, where the weights sum to one (*e.g.*, $0.4 + 0.3 + 0.2 + 0.1 = 1.0$). By way of example, an employer may be presented with four categories, such as skill set, experience, personal preference, and test. An employer may designate that the skill set category be worth thirty percent (0.30), the experience category be worth twenty percent (0.20), the personal preference category be worth thirty percent (0.30) and the test category be worth twenty percent (0.20), where the fractions total one (*e.g.*, $0.3 + 0.2 + 0.3 + 0.2 = 1.0$).

As set forth above, each employer criteria category may have various employer criteria associated with the category. According to an embodiment of the invention, an employer may designate employer criteria before starting a search for a candidate. The previously designated employer criteria may then be used in a candidate search.

According to another embodiment of the invention, when ranking employer criteria categories, an employer may be prompted to designate employer criteria for each employer criteria category. By way of the example above, an employer may designate that candidate information for preferences of salary, location, amount of travel, and size of the company are included in the personal preference category. Other weightings and manners of ranking categories may also be used.

At step 504, an employer designates a rating level for a candidate to be presented to an employer. According to an embodiment of the invention, an employer may

designate that candidate ratings must meet certain requirements to be presented to the employer. In an embodiment of the invention where a higher rating indicates a better candidate, an employer may set a minimum rating level for receiving information about a candidate. Conversely, in an embodiment of the invention where a lower rating indicates a better candidate, an employer may set a maximum rating level for receiving information about a candidate. By way of the example above, ratings may range from one to ten, with a higher rated candidate being preferable to a lower rated candidate. An employer may designate that no candidate with a rating lower than 8.0 be presented to the employer. Other manners of designating rating levels may also be used.

At step 506, candidate criteria information is received and quantified. According to an embodiment of the invention. Quantifying information may comprise taking information provided by a candidate and creating quantifiable values based on the information. Quantifying information may include quantifying test results, experience information, personal information, or other information provided by a candidate.

Quantifying information may also comprise combining various information from an employer criteria category into a quantified value. A candidate may provide a plurality of pieces of information for a particular category. The plurality of pieces of information may be combined and quantified. By way of the example above, the personal preference category comprises information about a candidate's personal preference for salary, location, amount of travel, and size of company. The candidate indicates that she desires a minimum salary of \$30,000, a job located in or near Chicago, IL, no travel, and a company of between 100 and 500 employees. The employer indicates that a position would pay \$32,500, the job would be in Toledo, OH, and require no travel, and that the company has 325 employees. Based on the employer criteria and the candidate information, the candidate matches three of the four individual employer criteria. A quantified value of 0.75 may be given for the personal preference category. By way of this continued example, the skill set category has a quantifiable value of 0.8 (*e.g.*, a candidate matches four of five required skill sets), the experience category has a quantifiable value of 1.0 (*e.g.*, the candidate has the requisite amount of experience), the personal preference category, as set forth above, has a quantifiable value of 0.75, and the test category has a quantifiable value of 0.85 (*e.g.*, the candidate answered 85 percent of

the questions correctly for a test). Other manners for quantifying candidate information may also be used.

At step 508, candidate ratings are calculated. According to an embodiment of the invention, a rating for each candidate may be calculated based on ranking of employer
5 criteria categories and quantified values for employer criteria categories. A candidate rating may comprise various employer criteria category ratings. The employer criteria category ratings may be summed to calculate a candidate ranking. By way of the example above, the skill set category rating is 0.24 ($0.3 * 0.8$), the experience category rating is 0.2 ($0.2 * 1.0$), the personal preference category rating is 0.225 ($0.3 * 0.75$), and
10 the test category rating is 0.17 ($0.2 * 0.85$). Summing the four categories results in a total of 0.835. The sum of the categories may be multiplied by ten, such that the candidate ranking is 8.84. Other manners for calculating a candidate rating may also be used.

At step 510, candidate ratings are reviewed to determine if candidates meet an employer's designated rating level to be presented to the employer. If no candidate meets
15 a designated level, an employer is informed of this at step 512. The employer then ends the candidate search at step 516.

If one or more candidates meet the an employer's designated rating level, an employer is informed of this at step 514. According to an embodiment of the invention, informing an employer that one or more candidates meet a designated rating level may
20 comprise presenting the candidates to the employer, including presenting the rating, information about the candidate, results of various employer criteria categories, and other information related to the candidate that an employer may be interested in. An employer may end the candidate search at step 516. Ending a candidate search at step 516, may comprise viewing employee information. Other manners for informing an employer may
25 also be used.

The following description provides another example of a candidate search system according to an embodiment of the invention. This description is not intended to be limiting, but is to provide an example of one manner of searching for a candidate. An employer is presented, such as on a computer screen, with four employer criteria
30 categories: skill set, experience, personal preferences, and testing. The employer is asked to rank the candidates in order of importance from 1 to 4, where 1 is the most

important and 4 is the least important. Using an input device associated with employer local device 404, the employer designates that the skill set category is most important, the personal preference category is next in importance, the experience category is of third importance, and that the test category is least important. Further, the employer is
5 prompted by the system to designate employer criteria for each category. The employer designates four skill sets for the skill set category, two years for the experience category, and salary range and location for the personal preference category. Further, the employer designates that no candidate with a rating lower than 8.0 should be presented to the employer.

10 Based on the rankings provided by the employer, the system assigns values to each category. The skill set category is assigned a value of 0.4, the personal preference category is assigned a value of 0.3, the experience category is assigned a value of 0.2, and the test category is assigned a value of 0.1.

The system takes candidate information, provided by candidates, and quantifies
15 the information based on employer criteria. Candidate A matches three of the four required skills, matches the to year experience requirement, matches the location and salary requirement, and correctly answered 64% of the questions for the test. Therefore, Candidate A receives quantified values of 0.75 for the skill set requirement, 1.0 for the experience category, 1.0 for the personal preference category, and 0.64 for the test
20 category. Candidate B matched all four of the required skill sets, has one year of experience, matches the salary range but would prefer to telecommute, and correctly answered 50% of the questions for the test. Therefore, Candidate B receives quantified values of 1.0 for the skill set requirement, 0.5 for the experience category, 0.50 for the personal preference category, and 0.50 for the test category.

25 The system calculates the rating for each candidate based on the ranking of the employer criteria categories and the quantified values of the candidate information. Candidate A receives a rating of 8.84 out of 10, where the rating = $((0.8 * 0.4) + (1.0 * 0.2) + (1.0 * 3.0) + (0.64 * 0.1)) * 10$. Candidate B receives a rating of 6.49 out of ten, where the rating = $((1.0 * 0.4) + (0.5 * 0.2) + (0.5 * 3.0) + (0.5 * 0.1)) * 10$.

30 Using the ratings, the system determines that Candidate A, with a rating of 8.84, meets the rating designation of the employer, and will be presented. Further, the system

determines that Candidate B, with a rating of 6.49, does not meet the rating designation of the employer, and therefore will not be presented to the employer. Once the employer has viewed Candidate A, the employer may exit the search . Other manners of searching for employees may also be used.

5 Figure 3 is a schematic illustrating a system 400 for matching candidates and employers according to an embodiment of the invention. System 400 may comprise multiple candidate local devices 402 and multiple employer local devices 404 connected to internet through multiple internet service providers (ISP) 406. Nevertheless, for purposes of illustrating the present invention, the discussion will presume two candidates
10 local devices 402 connected to internet 408 through an ISP 406 and two employer local devices 404 connected through another ISP 406.

 According to an embodiment of the invention, local devices 402, 404 may be devices used by a candidate or an employer to access internet 408 through ISP 406. Local device 402, 404 may alternatively access internet 406 directly. Local device 402,
15 404 may comprise a local processing device, a display, and an input. A local processing device may be a personal computer or other device for receiving information from the internet, and processing information as necessary. According to an embodiment of the invention, a local processing device may comprise a personal computer having a modem
20 module, a display module, a memory module, various input device modules, a processing module and other modules typically associated with a personal computer.

 System 400 may further comprise a central server (CS) 410 which may communicate with local device 402, 404 through internet 408 or other communications network. CS 410 may comprise a single server computer or multiple server computers configure to appear as a single resource to local device 402, 404. CS 410 may
25 communicate with Candidate Storage Module 412. According to an embodiment of the invention, Candidate Storage Module 412 may store candidate information, including personal information, employment history, educational background, employment experience, technical skills, employment preference, and interview availability. Candidate information may be provided by a candidate, or may be provided by third
30 parties. Other information may also be available.

Interview Module 414 may facilitate an interview between an employee and a candidate. According to an embodiment of the invention, Interview Module 414 may facilitate an interview via e-mail, telephone, video conference, in person, videotape, real-time internet chat, or other manner of interview. Facilitation may include arranging
5 schedules of an employer and a candidate, providing the appropriate network connections or physical facilities, or other manners of facilitating interviews between employers and candidates.

Employer Storage Module 416 may store employer information, including the name, address and contact (*e.g.*, telephone number, e-mail address, fax number, name of
10 person or department to contact, *etc.*) of an employer, a listing of current job openings, information about job openings, office locations, the type of work done, and clients of the employer. Other information may also be stored.

Background Module 418 may facilitate performing background checks on a candidate. Background checks may include police background checks, criminal
15 background checks, employment background checks, credit background checks, educational background checks, and other background checks associated with a candidate. Background Module 418 may receive and stored permission to perform a background check granted by a candidate, and may receive and store results of background checks performed.

According to an embodiment of the invention, Background Module 418 may facilitate interacting directly with appropriate parties to perform background checks. By way of example only, Background Module 418 may facilitate sending candidate permission to perform a background check to the appropriate parties (*e.g.*, directly to a bank, police station, *etc.*). Facilitation may include sending permission and receiving
20 results, such as by e-mail, fax or other manner. According to another embodiment of the invention, Background Module 418 may facilitate authorizing third parties to perform background checks. By way of example, Background Module 418 may facilitate authorizing a third party (*e.g.*, a private investigator, *etc.*) to perform a background check. Facilitating may include sending permission and receiving results via e-mail, fax, or
25 other manner. Other functions may also be performed.

Match Module 420 may match a candidate and an employer based on candidate information and employer criteria. According to an embodiment of the invention, an employer may designate employer criteria for selecting a candidate. Employer criteria may include personal information, employment history, educational background, job or project experience, technical skills, security clearance, employment preferences, interview availability and other information which may be of interest to an employer. Based on employer criteria, Match Module 420 may search candidate summaries and select those summaries which match employer criteria. According to an embodiment of the invention, an employer may designate certain employer criteria as having greater importance and other employer criteria as having less importance. By way of example only, a employer may designate that certain candidate skills and the availability of candidate to relocate are of high importance, while the salary requirements and the experience of a candidate are of lower importance. Match Module 420 may select candidate summaries which meet these designated employer criteria.

According to an embodiment of the invention, a user profile, based on user information, may be generated. A user profile may include a candidate profile, based on candidate information, or an employer profile, based on employer information. A user profile may be updated based on new information received, (*e.g.*, provided by a user, provided by third parties, *etc.*) and selections made by a user. A user profile may be used, such as by Match Module 420, to determine matches between an employer and a candidate.

According to an embodiment of the invention, an employer may designate employer criteria for selecting candidate summaries to review. By way of example, an employer may indicate, among other things, an interest in a candidate with experience in computer programming, and may specifically indicate that a candidate having the ability to program in C+, C++, java, and/or Unix programming languages is desired. Using employer criteria, an employer profile may be generated. According to another embodiment of the invention, a candidate may designate candidate criteria for selecting employers of interest. Candidate criteria may include salary, location, position, type of work, and other criteria. Using candidate criteria, a candidate profile may be generated.

Using employer criteria and an employer profile, Match Module 420 may present an employer with candidate summaries that meet employer profile, and this employer criteria. By way of example, Match Module 420 may present an employer with candidate summaries, where the candidates all are able to program in C+, C++, java, and/or Unix programming languages. An employer may select candidates to offer an interview, or may select none of the presented candidates.

As an employer selects (or does not select) various candidates presented to the employer, Match Module 420 may store information relating to the selections (or non-selections) of candidates made by an employer. Using information about selections, an employer profile may be updated. By way of the present example, an employer may select to offer interviews to candidates who can program in java and Unix programming languages, but not offer interviews to candidates who can program only in C+ or C++ programming languages. This selection information may be stored in Match Module 420 (or, as applicable, in Employer Storage Module 416 or Candidate Storage Module 412).

According to an embodiment of the invention, a user profile may be updated with selection information. By way of example only, an algorithm may determine when a user profile is altered such that the matching of an employer and candidates is altered. An algorithm may be employed which changes an employer profile when an employer makes a type of selection a certain number of times over a period of time. By way of the present example, an employer may be presented, over a predetermined period of time, with summaries for ten candidates, where five candidates can program in java and five candidates can program only in C+ but not program in java. An employer may select to offer interviews to the five candidates that can program in java, but not to offer interviews to the five candidates that can program only in C+. The employer profile may be modified to reflect these choices. Based on the modified employer profile, Match Module 420 may present candidate summaries to an employer, where a candidates able to program in java are selected, but candidates able to program only in C+ are not selected. According to another embodiment of the invention, candidate profile may be updated based on a candidate's selection of employers presented to the candidate.

Match Module 420 may update a user profile based on a variety of information, including new information provided by a user, new information received about a user

(*e.g.* press releases about new businesses, background checks, *etc.*), selections made by a user, and other various types of information. Candidate profiles and employer profiles may be updated based on new information. Updating user profiles may permit a service to be proactive by changing with a user. Other manners of matching may also be used.

5 According to another embodiment of the invention, a computer usable medium having computer readable program code embodied therein for an electronic competition may be provided. For example, the computer usable medium may comprise a CD ROM, a floppy disk, a hard disk, or any other computer usable medium. One or more of the modules of system 400 may comprise computer readable program code that is provided
10 on the computer usable medium such that when the computer usable medium is installed on a computer system, those modules cause the computer system to perform the functions described.

 According to one embodiment, modules of the present invention may comprise computer readable code that, when installed on a computer, perform the functions
15 described above. Also, only some of the modules may be provided in computer readable code.

 According to one specific embodiment of the present invention, Candidate Storage Module 412 Interview Storage Module 414, Employer Storage Module 416, Background Module 418 and Match Module 420 of system 400 may comprise
20 components of a software system. System 400 may operate on a network and may be connected to other systems sharing a common database. Other hardware arrangements may also be provided.

 Other embodiments, uses and advantages of the present invention will be apparent to those skilled in the art from consideration of the specification and practice of
25 the invention disclosed herein. The specification and examples should be considered exemplary only. The intended scope of the invention is only limited by the claims appended hereto.

Claims**What is claimed is:**

1. A method for analysis of a candidate based on employer criteria comprising the steps of:
 - 5 presenting an employer with a plurality of employer criteria categories;
 - receiving a ranking of the plurality of employee criteria categories, wherein the ranking comprises indicating the relative importance of the plurality of employee criteria categories; and
 - 10 rating at least one candidate based on the ranking of the plurality of employee criteria categories.
2. The method according to claim 1, where the ranking of the plurality of employer criteria categories comprises assigning each of the plurality of employer criteria a fraction, wherein the sum total of the fractions is one.
3. The method according to claim 2, wherein ranking the at least one candidate
 - 15 further comprises:
 - providing employer criteria scores for each of the plurality of employer criteria categories for the at least one candidate;
 - 20 multiplying each of the employer criteria scores by the corresponding fraction;
 - and
 - summing the multiplied products to create a rating.
4. The method according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of employer criteria categories comprise at least one of:
 - a) skill sets;
 - b) experience;
 - 25 c) personal preference; and
 - d) testing score.
5. The method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
 - receiving a rating criteria designation, wherein the rating criteria designation indicates the rating requirements necessary for a candidate to be presented;

determining which of the at least one rated candidates meets the rating criteria designation; and

presenting, based on the rating criteria designation, one of:

- 5 a) at least one candidate who meets the rating criteria designation; or
- b) an indication that no candidate meets the rating criteria designation.

6. The method according to claim 5, wherein the ranking of the plurality of employee criteria categories and the rating criteria designation are provided by an employer.

10

7. A system for analysis of a candidate based on employer criteria comprising:
means for presenting an employer with a plurality of employer criteria categories;
means for receiving a ranking of the plurality of employee criteria categories,
wherein the ranking comprises indicating the relative importance of the plurality of
employee criteria categories; and

15

means for rating at least one candidate based on the ranking of the plurality of employee criteria categories.

8. The system according to claim 7, where the ranking of the plurality of employer criteria categories comprises assigning each of the plurality of employer criteria a fraction, wherein the sum total of the fractions is one.

20

9. The system according to claim 8, wherein the means for ranking the at least one candidate further comprises:

means for providing employer criteria scores for each of the plurality of employer criteria categories for the at least one candidate;

25 means for multiplying each of the employer criteria scores by the corresponding fraction; and

means for summing the multiplied products to create a rating.

10. The system according to claim 7, wherein the plurality of employer criteria categories comprise at least one of:

- 30 e) skill sets;
- f) experience;

- g) personal preference; and
- h) testing score.

11. The system according to claim 7, further comprising:
means for receiving a rating level designation, wherein the rating criteria
5 designation indicates the rating requirements necessary for a candidate to be presented;
means for determining which of the at least one rated candidates meets the rating
level designation; and
means for presenting, based on the rating level designation, one of:
a) at least one candidate who meets the rating level designation; or
10 b) an indication that no candidate meets the rating level designation.
12. The system according to claim 1, wherein the ranking of the plurality of employee
criteria categories and the rating level designation are provided by an employer.
13. A method for analysis of a candidate based on employer criteria comprising the
steps of:
15 receiving a list of a plurality of employer criteria categories;
designating a ranking of the plurality of employee criteria categories, wherein the
ranking comprises indicating the relative importance of the plurality of employee criteria
categories; and
receiving a rating of at least one candidate based on the ranking of the plurality of
20 employee criteria categories.
14. The method according to claim 13, where the ranking of the plurality of employer
criteria categories comprises assigning each of the plurality of employer criteria a
fraction, wherein the sum total of the fractions is one.
15. The method according to claim 14, wherein ranking the at least one candidate
25 further comprises providing employer criteria scores for each of the plurality of employer
criteria categories for the at least one candidate, wherein each of the employer criteria
scores are multiplied by the corresponding fraction and the multiplied products are
summed to create a rating.
16. The method according to claim 13, wherein the plurality of employer criteria
30 categories comprise at least one of:
a) skill sets;

- b) experience;
- c) personal preference; and
- d) testing score.

17. The method according to claim 13, further comprising the steps of:

5 designating a rating level, wherein the rating level designation indicates the rating requirements necessary for a candidate to be presented; and

receiving a presentation, based on the rating level designation, of one of:

- a) at least one candidate who meets the rating level designation; or
- b) an indication that no candidate meets the rating level designation.

10 18. The method according to claim 17, wherein the ranking of the plurality of employee criteria categories and the rating level designation are provided by an employer.

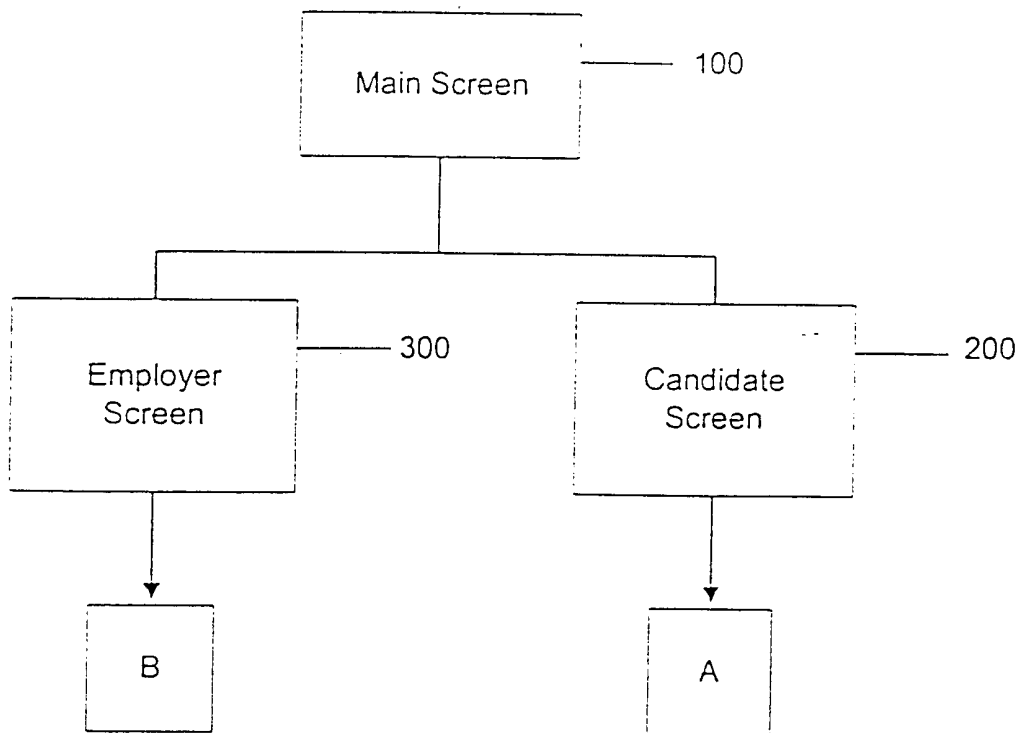


FIG. 1A

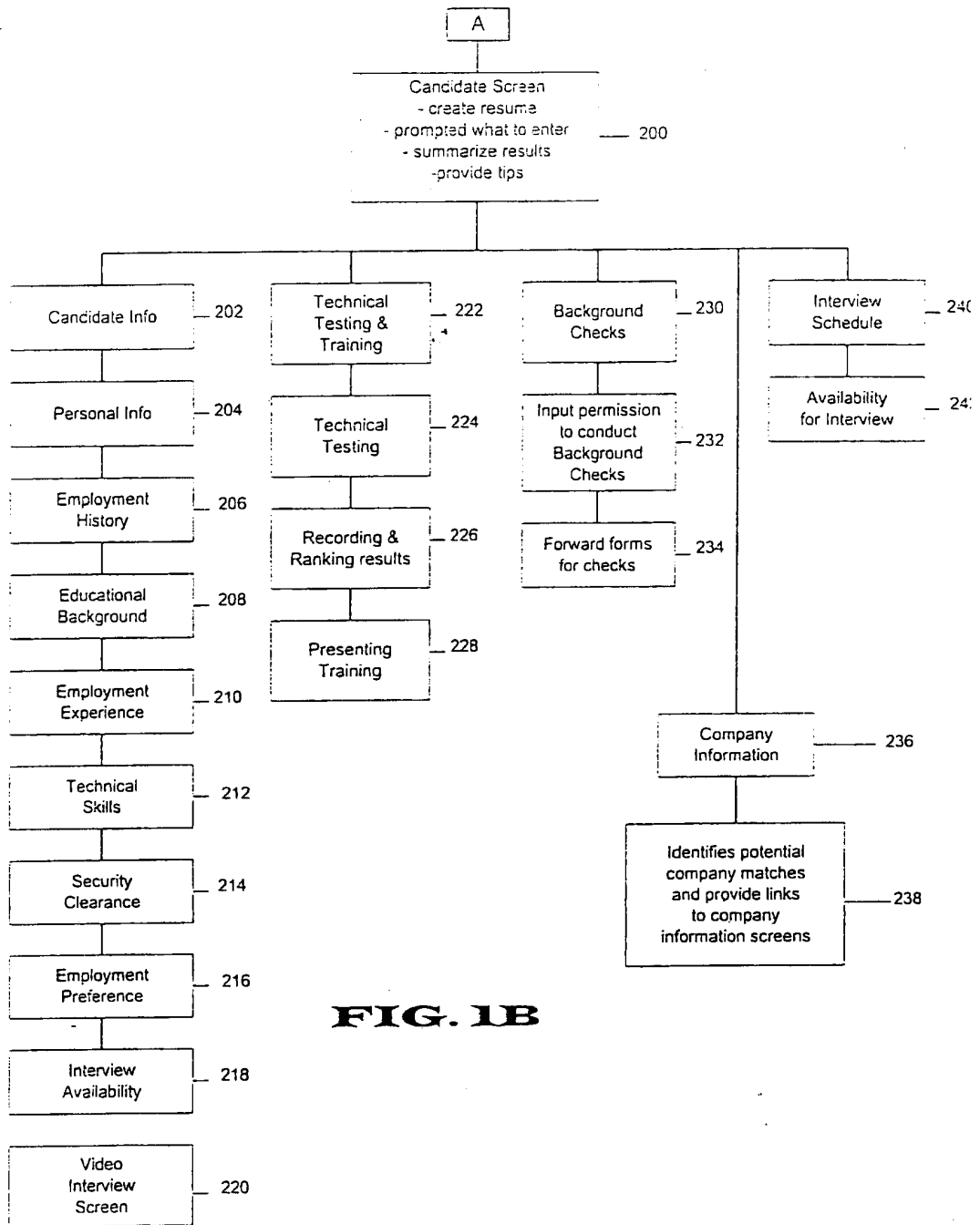


FIG. 1B

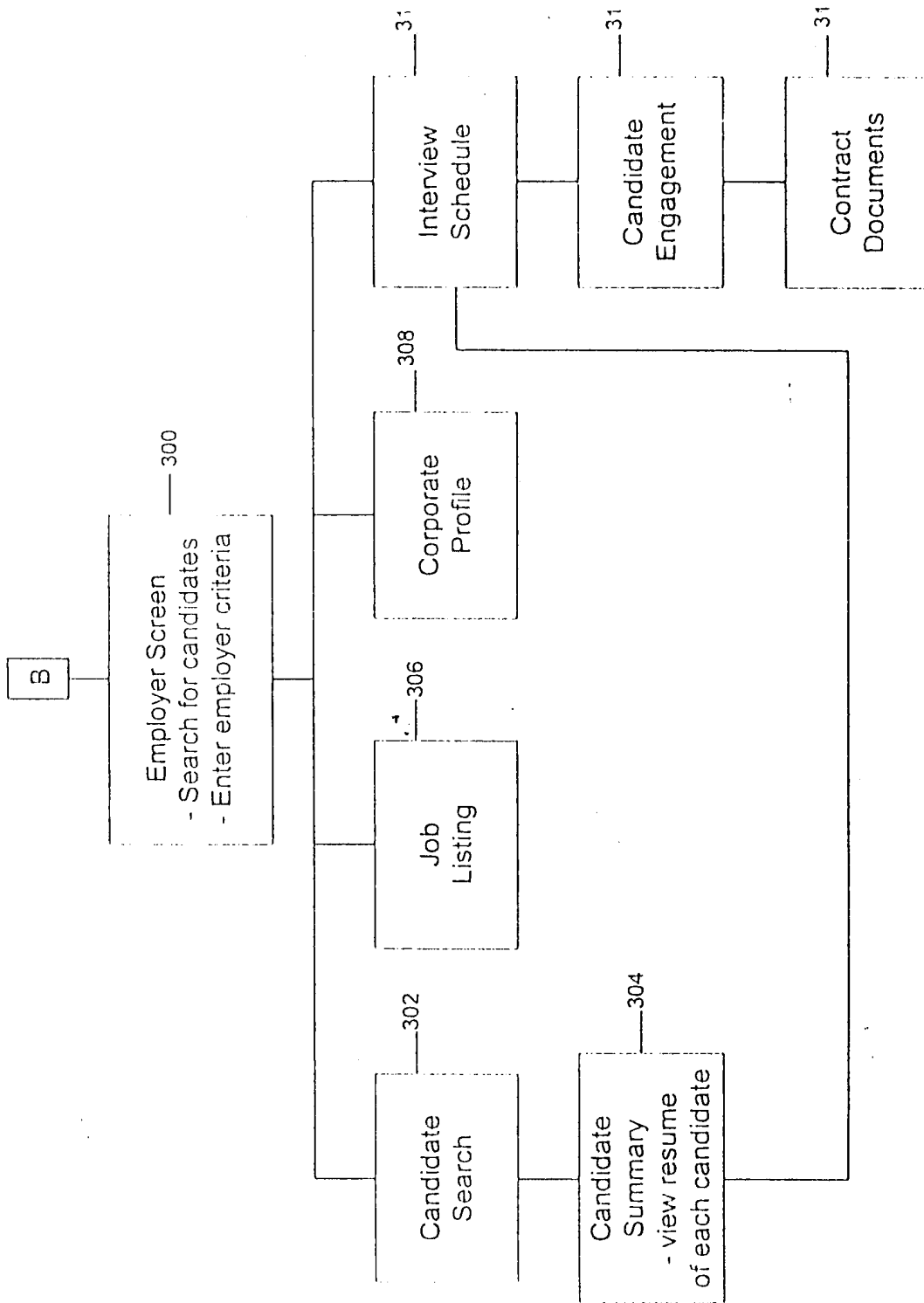


FIG. 1C

FIG. 1C

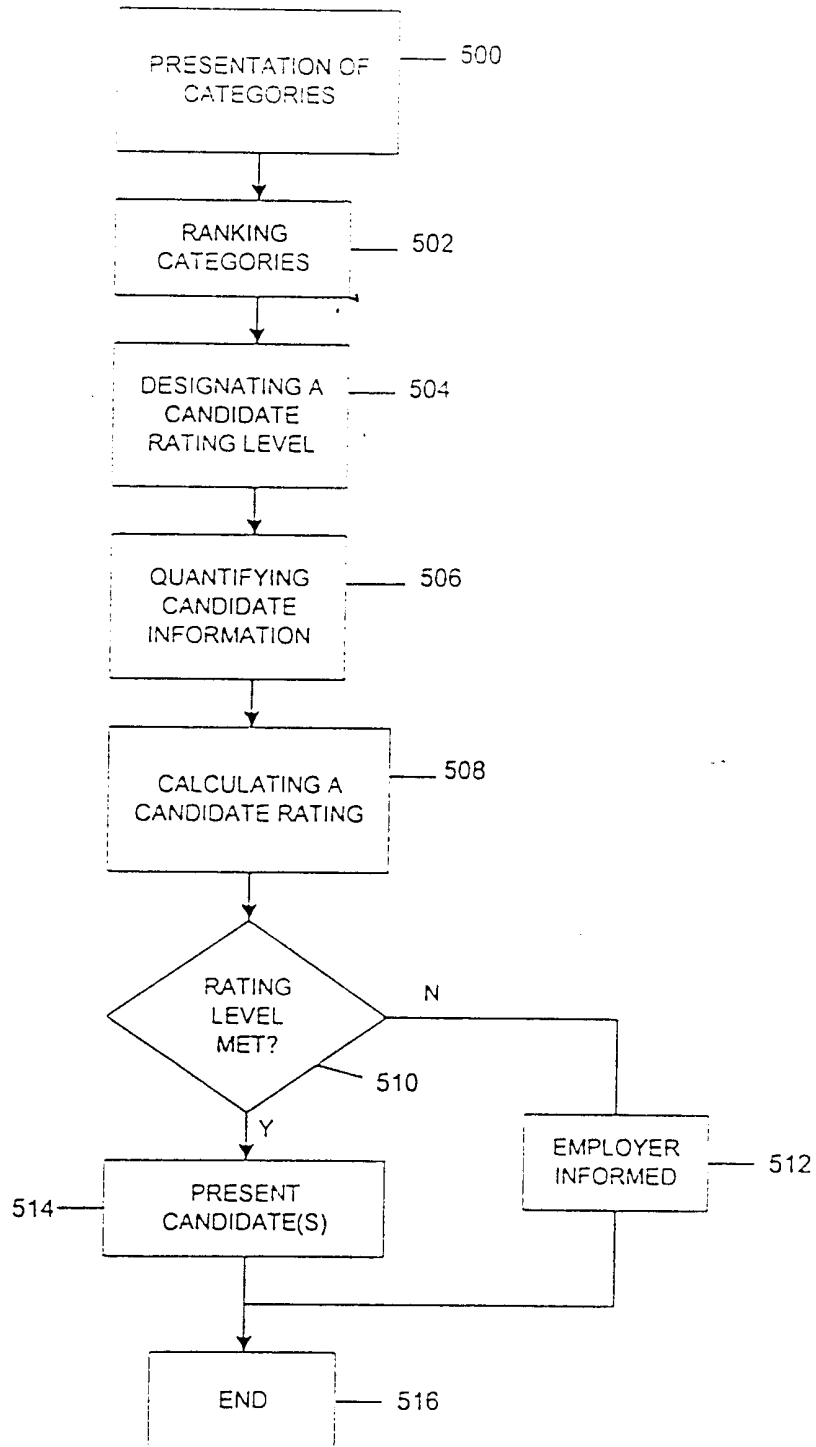


FIG. 2

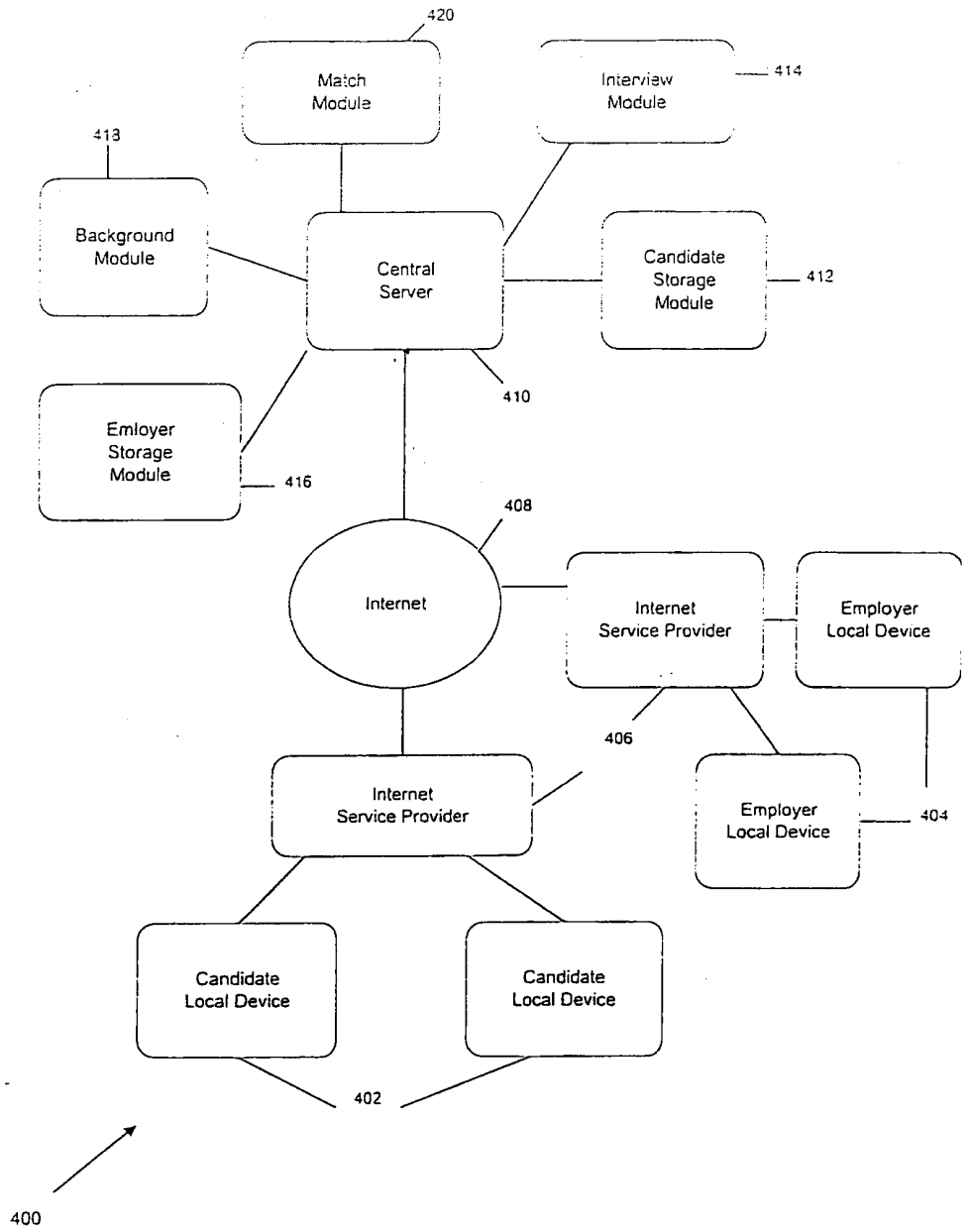


FIG. 3

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US01/05267

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER IPC(7) : G06F 17/60, 17/30 US CL : 705/1, 26, 27, 37 According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC		
B. FIELDS SEARCHED Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) U.S. : 705/1, 26, 27, 37 Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used) STN, WEST, EAST search terms: employer, candidate, matching, testing skill, background check, scoring, ranking, ...		
C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	US 5,884,270 A (WALKER et al) 16 March 1999, col. 6-23	1-18
Y	US 5,592,375 A (SALMON et al) 07 January 1997, col. 3-18	1-18
<input type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. <input type="checkbox"/> See patent family annex.		
* Special categories of cited documents: "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance "B" earlier document published on or after the international filing date "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified) "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed "T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention "X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone "Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art "&" document member of the same patent family		
Date of the actual completion of the international search 22 JUNE 2001		Date of mailing of the international search report 26 JUL 2001
Name and mailing address of the ISA/US Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks Box PCT Washington, D.C. 20231 Facsimile No. (703) 305-3230		Authorized officer <i>Peggy Blum</i> VINCENT A. MILLIN Telephone No. (703) 308-1065