Since the examiners are the ones who are undoubtedly the ones within the PTO with the most experience doing examinations under whatever the current regime is, wouldn't it be most informative to ask them what they need in order to make their production quotas without sacrificing quality? Because from what I remember, there hasn't been any serious reclassification of any of the art areas since the '70's that might make it as quick to do an actual manual search as it used to be, nor has there been any increase in the hours/BD quota to adjust for all the added little things examiners have to do (e.g. act as their own draftsmen approving or disapproving of drawings without having been trained how) since the move to King Street and the increased computerization of the whole process of doing a search and writing up a substantive Office Action. It seems to me that if you want to maintain the productivity and quality the office once had, it would be obvious to try to reproduce as closely as possible the conditions that allowed those two goals to be achieved in the first place, namely searches of class/subclass of no more documents than there were back in the '70's, and Office Actions no more complicated than they were back at that time. I recall when an office action was done in triplicate on carbon copies with simple lines to fill in and boxes to check off, much unlike today where examiners often have to be close to patent agents if not full attorneys in order to write up an Office Action with numerous fine points of law to know and apply. As to computerized searches, I can vouch that word searches alone are not necessarily applicable to all areas of art, not even discounting the case law on "applicants being their own lexicographers" which is always read far too broadly than the actual issue addressed in that case.

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