

June 2009 Connection Newsletter

The Job Search

Most people's first step in looking for work is the want ads. But did you know that only a very small percentage of jobs are actually filled through openings published in newspapers? It's the difference between the open market and the unadvertised, or hidden, job market.

The Open Job Market

The open market is made up of positions that a company or organization has taken some active measure to publicize, usually through an ad, employment agency, or search firm. As soon as a position is placed on this open market, any number of applicants can respond and the selection process becomes very competitive.

Just think of all the competition if you limited yourself to only applying to those jobs that are advertised in the paper. *Remember that an effective job search means being better and more noticeable than the competition.* Therefore, only using classified ads to find your next job is not the way to go. The open market should, however, be a part of your search methods.

In responding to an ad, to survive that first screening, you must meet most of the qualifications mentioned and be able to demonstrate how well you meet them.

The Hidden Job Market

The hidden job market is a little tougher to break into than simply opening the paper to the want ads, but it will always give you a greater chance of landing that job of your dreams. The hidden market includes all positions in various stages of development that have not yet been communicated through the open market.

In order to gain access to these positions, you must locate and approach the appropriate decision-makers. If you can identify a need within an organization before it is publicized on the open market, *you will significantly reduce, if not eliminate, the competition!*

This proactive approach will help you in several ways:

- Uncover opportunities you would never discover in any other way.

- Provide you with better interviews.

- Enhance your credibility—you may really win points for identifying the opportunity.

- Reduce or eliminate the competition.

But how do you tap into the hidden job market? The secret is *NETWORKING*.

Networking

Most employers don't need to advertise. There are enough applicants available to them without advertising. Also, most employers don't want to advertise. They would rather consider someone referred to them from a trusted employee or colleague. It's like looking for a doctor or a mechanic; most people would rather go to someone recommended by a friend rather than to a random name found in an advertisement.

Networking is asking a small favor, some information and/or some advice. *A network contact is any person who can refer you to others who have or know about job openings.*

Excerpt from Career Connection

The Networking System

A network consists of people you know and those you will soon meet.

Step 1: Begin with people with whom you are very comfortable with; friends, family, neighbors, co-workers. **Objective:** *Nurture the relationship, ask for assistance.*

Step 2: Contact people with whom you are less familiar; acquaintances, business contacts. **Objective:** *Build the relationship, ask for ideas.*

Step 3: “Stretch” your network by getting acquainted with people who are friends, associates, and acquaintances of *your friends’ acquaintances*. **Objective:** *Meet and get acquainted.*

Step 4: Finally, expand your network to people you will have to seek out on your own through “cold calling.” **Objective:** *Establish Contact.*

How to Approach a Network Contact

- Greeting (mention a contact if you have one).
- Tell the person you’re looking for a job. Tell them you need their help and offer specific suggestions. (Review resume, ask for advice on how to get into field, etc.)
- Tell the person why you are contacting them. (“I’m calling you because you know many people in the _____ industry. I need your help in identifying people to contact.”) This phone call is also an opportunity to set up a meeting with the person.
- Give a brief statement of your skills.
- Let the person know how they can help. (“Will you give your manager my resume and tell him/her about my background?” “Could you watch the job postings in your company?” “Would you be open to meeting with me?”)
- Talk about what you’ve done in your search and ask for new ideas. (“So far I’ve been answering the want ads. What other ideas do you have for what I should be doing?”)
- Ask for additional contacts. (“I’d like to continue my networking. Who else should I be talking to? May I use your name?”)
- Thank them and schedule a date to call back. (“I’d like to stay in touch with you. When would be a good time to call back?”)
- Follow through with a thank-you note and your resume. Stay in regular contact.

Excerpt from Career Connection