

# BEST JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES

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Written by Linda Matias  
President, CareerStrides  
President, The National Resume Writers' Association

# **JOB HUNTING: GETTING STARTED**

Job search methods include networking, going on actual interviews, answering ads, searching on-line, attending job fairs, following up, and cold calling.

With so many activities to choose from, you won't have a problem filling your day with proactive activities. Plan to spend 40hrs. per week on your job search campaign.

## **STRATEGY #1: THE OPEN JOB MARKET**

What is the open job market? This is where jobs are advertised and open to the public. The positions can be found in newspapers, professional organizations, trade journals, company websites, and Internet job banks.

### **Disadvantages**

- Since only 15 to 20 percent of positions are filled through the open job market, you shouldn't spend more 30 minutes a day answering ads. In today's job search, time is your most valuable asset. Time wasted on want ads cannot be regained so spend your time on proactive job search efforts like building connections.
- The competition can be stiff because many qualified candidates may read the ad.
- Usually, only entry-level jobs are posted in classified ads.

### **Advantages**

- There aren't any guessing games. The ad usually spells out what steps you need to take to be considered for the position.
- You can research the company and tailor your resume and cover letter for the position you are applying.
- Classified ads are easily accessible.

## COMMON TYPE OF ADS

- **Open ads:** The employer identifies who they are, and provides a job description. This is the best type of ad to respond to because you can conduct research and adapt your cover letter and resume to the company.
- **Blind ads:** The employer keeps their identify a secret. Companies post blind ads for several reasons: (1) the employee they are looking to replace doesn't know their job is in jeopardy (2) companies receive more qualified candidates because "job shoppers" usually won't submit their resume (3) they can screen applicants without being bombarded with phone calls.
- **Catch-type ad:** This type of ad emphasizes how much money you can make and downplays the qualifications for the job.  

This is the worst ad to answer because most likely, the job is not legitimate or comes with strings attached. These ads often state that "no experience necessary" or they have "\$\$\$\$\$\$" in the ad.
- **Agency spot ads:** These are ads that are placed by recruiters. These ads omit the name of the employer.

## HOW TO RESPOND TO ADS

1. Answer ads promptly. Positions can get filled quickly so don't put the ad aside and wait until the end of the week to submit your resume.
2. Don't answer all the ads. Go after the top 10 ads and carefully craft a focused cover letter and resume.
3. Use the wording in the ad to your advantage. Carefully review the wording of the ad and use the company's own language to sell yourself.

## STRATEGY #2: THE HIDDEN JOB MARKET

Most jobs are not advertised in the classifieds. This means that job seekers must spend most of their time tapping into the hidden job market. These "leads" can come from professional

and personal contacts, through networking, and other efforts where you can get information on unadvertised openings.

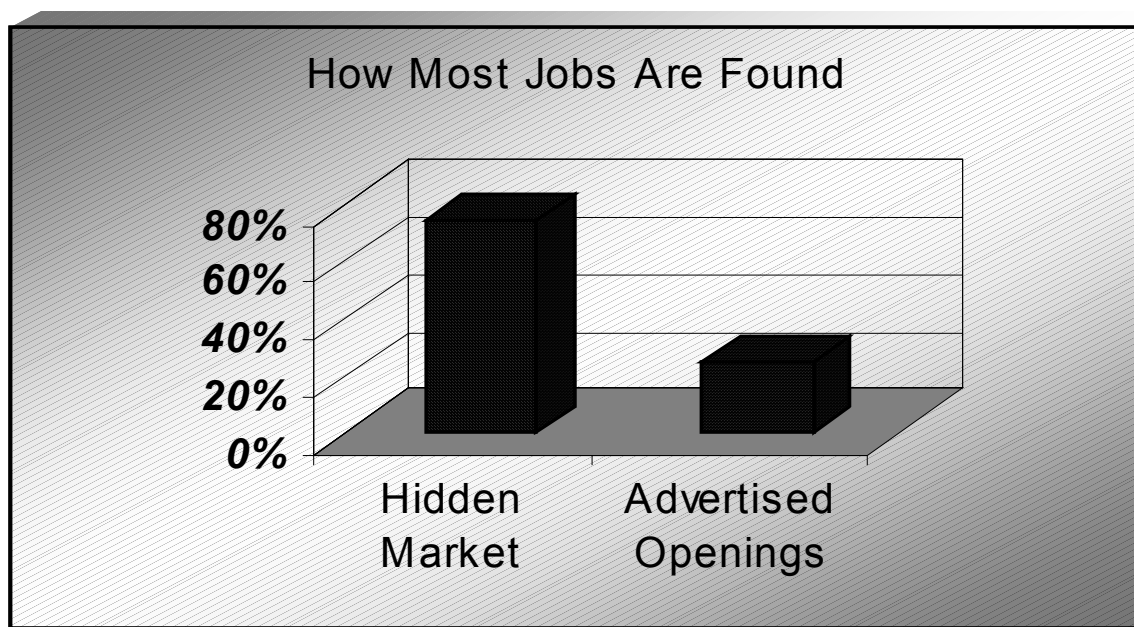
This is called networking and it's the most effective job search strategy and the one that you should spend most of your time on. Networking will allow you to tap into the hidden job market where the majority of jobs are found.

### Disadvantages

- Networking may be a skill that you need to develop.
- If you are an introvert or not used to asking for guidance, you may find building your network challenging.
- If you never took the time to develop a strong network, you may have a difficult time thinking of people who can help you.

### Advantages

- As noted in the graph below, 71% of job seekers find their jobs through the hidden job market.
- Networking is an effective strategy for exploring career options, gaining insider information, and learning about hiring practices.
- Expand your network and obtain referrals.



### STRATEGY #3: USING THE INTERNET

**Posting your resume on job boards:** more and more job seekers are applying for positions on job boards such as Monster.com and Hotjobs.com. Though those sites can be effective, don't neglect niche sites and local boards.

**Applying through the corporate web site:** these are positions are posted on the corporate web site and the employer may ask screening questions. This is their way of gathering information about you that may not be revealed on the resume. If possible, send your resume via snail mail to avoid being screened out.

#### Disadvantages

- Again, the competition can be stiff. Companies have been known to get thousands of resumes.
- Some companies ask pre-qualifying questions on the website. Your answers are used to screen you out.
- Once you post your resume on job boards, less than reputable companies may approach you.

#### Advantages

- There aren't any guessing games. The ad usually spells out what steps you need to take to be considered for the position.
- You can research the company and tailor your resume and cover letter for the position you are applying.
- You can surf the Internet and apply for jobs any time of the day.

### STRATEGY #5: RECRUITMENT FIRMS

A recruiter works *with* you, but they don't work *for* you. They work for the employer and that is where their allegiance lies. Since only 5% of job seekers find employment through a recruiter, make sure you use this method as a tool not as your only resource. The book *Get A Job In 30 Days or Less* defines recruiters as:

#### Contingency Employment Agency

- Fee is paid only when placement is made.

- Must make two sales in order to get paid: individual client and company.
- Wants to build pool candidates to sell to various companies.
- Resume may be floated to clients.
- Clients dealing with more than one agency; may fill opening and not advise other agencies. Job orders can be duplicated.

#### **Retainer Executive Search Firm**

- Hired and paid by company whether hire is made or not.
- Second fee paid when placement made based on % of salary.
- Usually searches for candidates in current position; not particularly interested in those actually looking for a job. Your resume not sent out without permission.
- Your resume may be included with other top candidates for submission to employers.
- Definite job opening in existence. Agency usually has exclusive arrangement with client on job opening.

## **Here's Your Takeaway: Job Search Rules**

- ✓ Spend 85% of your time searching for a job in the hidden job market
- ✓ Spend most of your time on active job search methods such as networking, cold calling, or attending job fairs. Get dressed each day as though you are going to work. Often the way we dress can dictate the way we feel.
- ✓ Strive for two interviews per day. This includes formal and informal interviews with individuals that are able to guide you in your job search.
- ✓ Don't procrastinate and fill your days with non-job search activity.
- ✓ Don't spend more than 30 minutes a day answering ads.
- ✓ Treat your job search like a job. Establish daily, weekly, and monthly goals.
- ✓ Strive for two interviews per day.
- ✓ Don't procrastinate and fill your days with non-job search activity.