

# The Job Search

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## ARE YOU READY FOR THE JOB SEARCH?

You are not ready to commence your Job Search until you have answered "Yes" to every question and have also answered "Explain."

1. Do you know what talents may be "**transferable**" to target companies?  
Your answer: Yes ..... No..... (Explain, Yes)
2. Do you know what **industries** would be interested in you?  
Your answer: Yes..... No..... (Explain, Yes)
3. Do you know what **companies** within the industries to contact?  
Your answer: Yes..... No..... (Explain, Yes)
4. Do you know the **background** of companies interested in your talent?  
Your answer: Yes..... No..... (Explain, Yes)
5. Do you know the **people** or level to contact in these companies?  
Your answer: Yes..... No..... (Explain, Yes)
6. Do you know the **name** and position of the right person to speak to?  
Your answer: Yes..... No..... (Explain, Yes)
7. Can you prepare **presentations** to enable you to get inside the company?  
Your answer: Yes..... No..... (Explain, Yes)
8. Do you have both **local** and **national** contacts?  
Your answer: Yes..... No..... (Explain, Yes)
9. Do you know how to use your personal contacts (**network**) to help you?  
Your answer: Yes..... No..... (Explain, Yes)
10. Do you know how to handle **testing** at interviews such as personality profiles, drug testing and polygraph?  
Your answer: Yes..... No..... (Explain, Yes)
11. Can you successfully keep **several offers** open so you can choose?  
Your answer: Yes..... No..... (Explain, Yes)
12. Can you really identify the **best offers** for you?  
Your answer: Yes..... No..... (Explain, Yes)
13. Do you know the **salary** levels for positions in your field?  
Your answer: Yes..... No..... (Explain, Yes)
14. If you are an experienced professional in your field, do you know how to handle **salary negotiations**?  
Your answer: Yes..... No..... (Explain, Yes)



## JOB HUNTING

The search for employment is an honorable quest. Never feel apologetic or self-conscious about applying for a job. Employers need to hire. Communicate directly and honestly with those who are trying to find qualified employees. They need you! Before beginning your job hunt, you should have a clear objective and should know the types of employers most likely to hire you.

### A. IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS

#### 1. Use Employer Directories

Employer Directories are available in the Career Development Library or through other libraries. Reference librarians are valuable guides in locating materials in their libraries. Several types of directories are available. For example:

*Sorkins* is widely known

*The Kansas City Business Journal's* Top 25

*Ingram's* Top 25

#### 2. Use Reference Copies of Past Job Listings

These are also available in the Career Development Center Library. Employers who have recently sought to hire MWSCU student/alumni may have additional openings.

#### 3. Follow Up On Suggestions Gathered From Your Informational Interviews

Sources of unadvertised job opportunities may have been suggested.

#### 4. Develop A Network of Contacts

Apprise as many people as possible that you are seeking a particular kind of job. This may be done informally through people you already know (*e.g., friends, family, faculty, former employers, etc.*). You might also develop contacts in your chosen career field through professional associations.

#### 5. Use the internet

Research companies on the world wide web. You can gather employment trends, vacancy listings and company profiles from local, regional, national and international markets. Newspapers from all major cities are on line and you can access the classified ads as well as the business sections. Here are some suggestions:

Use search engines such as NACELink, careerbuilder.com and monster.com

Go to the company websites for information

Google company names or industries

Search the Department of Labor web site



## B. METHODS OF APPROACHING EMPLOYERS

### 1. Personal or Professional Referral

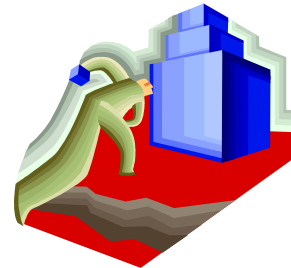
Direct contact with a "key" person who has the power to either hire you or personally recommend to others that you should be hired. You may have developed these contacts through your personal "network" strategy, through personal referral by faculty or professional colleagues, or through informal contacts at professional conferences or meetings. An "interview" might be arranged solely for the purpose of a general discussion of how your background and abilities might be utilized in that organization. Typically, neither you nor the "key" person begins this discussion with a specific job in mind. If there is a possible "match," discussion of specific possibilities might result.



### 2. Direct Application

Applying to a potential employer although a specific position is not currently advertised. If you are seeking employment locally, your contact may be by letter, visit, or phone call to the person responsible for hiring in the area of your career interest. A letter and resume are recommended. You also might visit in person or telephone to inquire about possibilities.

When approaching employers, communicate knowledge of their organization and information about your skills and abilities.



Some examples of possible "opening lines":

- a. "I'm interested in possible employment with ABC Corporation. I've reviewed information about your company and am interested in your planning group. Could we schedule an appointment?"
- b. "I have been researching the office supplies industry and am interested in employment opportunities with Better Copies. What procedure should I follow to apply for employment?...May I make an appointment?...May I send you my resume?...When may I phone back?"
- c. "I am impressed with the treatment program your staff uses to counsel depressed youth. I've worked in a similar program and would like to work for such an organization. Could we schedule an appointment?"
- d. "I will complete my degree in Journalism in May. My training has included all aspects of print media. I'm most interested in news coverage. What information do you need to consider me for employment?"

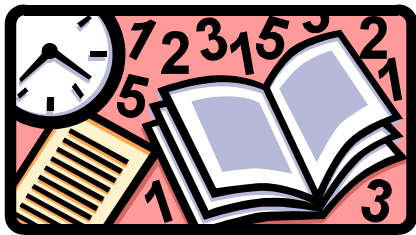
- e. "George Thomas, a broker with your San Jose office, has provided me with very positive feedback about your firm. He said that you are the key person in the hiring process. When could we meet to discuss possible employment?"
- f. "I understand why you might hesitate to fly me to New York for an appointment. When could we schedule a telephone interview?"
- g. "While disappointed that I applied at a time of the year when you are not hiring, I am not discouraged. When might I re-apply?"

**CAUTION:** *These are only suggestions and should be revised and tailored to fit specific circumstances and your personal style.*

A phone call alone is seldom adequate. Some employers have a policy of stating "no openings" in response to initial inquiries made by telephone from job applicants, because they receive such a heavy volume of telephone calls. Also, until the employer has received a written record of your work interest and qualification, you cannot be seriously considered for employment. Public sector employers generally require that you submit their application forms, either hard copy or online.

After you have submitted an application form or resume, it is appropriate to phone the employer within 5 working days to check on the status of your application. The employer may be alerted that you are seriously interested in employment and will thus be likely to give your resume close attention.

If you visit the employer as a primary contact and submit a resume or other application, but are not granted an interview, find out whom you may phone to discuss your qualifications and the most convenient time for you to call.



Whenever you are unable to immediately obtain an interview appointment, be sure that the employer is aware of your continued interest by stating that you would like to contact them again in the near future. Be polite but persistent in your efforts. Don't permit your employment applications to go without periodic follow-up calls. You cannot count on being considered if three months have elapsed since you last made contact.

### **3. Applying for Advertised Openings**

These are often found through traditional sources of employment (e.g., job listings, classified ads, public and private employment agencies, professional associations).

When applying for advertised openings, consider the following suggestions:

- a. Follow application instructions carefully. Apply promptly. Be sure all materials are complete, neat and well written, whether hard copy or on line. Whenever possible, send hard copies as well as online applications.
- b. Don't limit your applications only to positions for which you have all the stated qualifications. Clearly and specifically state the reasons you are qualified to fill the position. Employers do not always find a "perfect" match and may modify their criteria when they receive a well-prepared application.
- c. Note organizations that are advertising many openings at the same time. This may be an indication of expansion, new funding sources, etc. Apply to these employers for possible employment, even if a position of interest to you is not specifically advertised. (Be sure to state your employment interest!).
- d. You may apply to the same employer more than once. Even if turned down one time, you may be successful in subsequent attempts.
- e. Don't avoid ads that list only a P.O. Box and no employer name. Some employers use this technique to avoid interruptions in their workplaces.
- f. Whenever possible, reinforce your application with personal contact and/or recommendation of key contacts.

#### 4. Campus Interviews

If you are a currently registered MWSU student, you may wish to take advantage of the opportunity to interview on-campus with employers who have openings consistent with your career goals. Register with Career Development online to be eligible for these services.

[www.missouriwestern.edu/careerdevelopment](http://www.missouriwestern.edu/careerdevelopment)



### C. MANAGING YOUR JOB SEARCH

Your job search will be more productive and efficient if you carefully organize your time. Some basic time management practices which may help include:

#### 1. Analyze How You Spend Your Time

Find the time available for job hunting tasks and schedule that time. If possible, try to plan 2-3 hour blocks of time with minimal interruptions.



#### 2. Keep a Personal Calendar Which Includes All Of Your Commitments

Mark your calendar with both specific appointments and reminders to follow through with returning calls, etc. Keep your calendar with you.

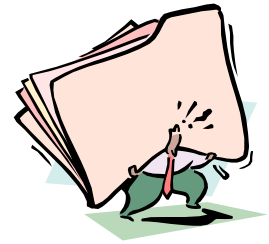
#### 3. Set Objectives And Priorities



Make a list each day of tasks to be completed.  
Mark items on this list which have highest priority and do these first.

#### 4. **Keep Organized**

Arrange all your job hunting information in a notebook, file folder, etc. Retain copies of all letters and application forms you submit. Keep complete records of all communications with contacts in your "network." By keeping things well organized, you're less likely to "lose" or "forget" important items.



#### 5. **Give Yourself "do-able" Tasks**

Plan in small units (e.g., calling two employers per week). You can only do one thing at a time. If you try to do everything at once, you are setting yourself up to fail.



Once you have set your objective(s), you might find it helpful to use a chart to help you organize this process. Such a chart will encourage you to take some action each day.



### **OTHER HELPFUL HINTS**

**COMPLETE APPLICATIONS NEATLY AND TRUTHFULLY**--Information may be verified prior to and as a condition of employment.

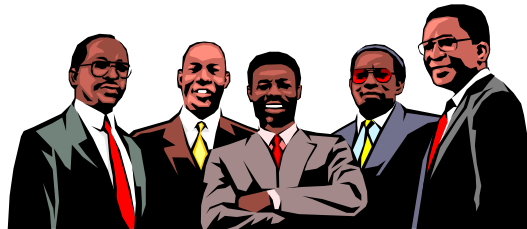
**FOLLOW THROUGH**--Politely keep in touch with possible employers. If you hear nothing after applying for an opening, inquire about the process of their selection.

**VARY YOUR APPROACH**--If one method is not working, try another.

**DON'T EXPECT OVERNIGHT SUCCESS**--It is not uncommon for a job hunt to take months. There is nothing wrong with you.

#### **DEVELOP A SUPPORT SYSTEM**—

You cannot do it alone!  
Form a group with other job hunters.



**LOOK FOR AN INTERIM JOB**--This will provide for your basic survival needs (eating, keeping a roof over your head) and help you avoid committing yourself to a permanent job you don't really like/want. If you do this, try to find work that keeps some daytime business hours free for interviews. It is almost impossible to look for another job if you are working from 8-5, Monday through Friday.

**VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME**--This is frequently the entry into non-profit organizations' paid positions and will add to your experience.

**BE POLITE**--Secretaries, receptionists and potential employers are people, too. They are far more helpful and informative when treated with respect.

**GIVE YOURSELF A BREAK**--When you've completed a difficult task, had a good interview, etc., reward yourself. Allow free time for renewal. Job hunting is, at best, difficult and tension-producing. The better you feel about yourself, the more you will impress potential employers.



**DON'T SIT AT HOME**--People seldom get a job by writing letters or making phone calls.

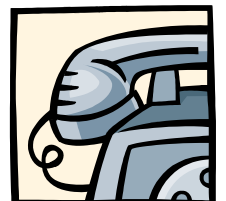


## CONTACTING POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS

Your next step is to try to convert job leads into job interviews. The action that you take with potential employers boils down to three methods of contact -- writing, telephoning, and visiting.

### Letters

- Writing letters to potential employers is the #1 method (most frequently used) by job seekers.
- The main criticism to this approach is the low rate of return.
- You can insure the best response by writing your letter in a way that will capture the attention of people serving a variety of functions in your career field.
- Compose and type your letters individually.
- Address correspondence to names of individuals with job titles that are appropriate.
- If applying to an organization from a distance, focus on geographic interest and a specific career goal.
- Regarding the content of your cover letters, there are several options:
  - State that you are available for an interview. (*Leave the initiative up to the employer*).
  - State that you plan to be in the area at a particular time. You will call about the possibility of arranging an interview during that time period. (*You take the initiative*).



- Reread the information you have on an employer as a result of your research.
- Make some notes about key points you wish to make.
- Know the name and title of the person you wish to reach.
- When the secretary answers, ask directly and positively for the person you want.
- If the secretary asks, "May I help you?" take him/her up on it.
- State that you wish to reach Mr./Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ Ask when he/she will be free.
- Insist politely*** if there is another block to your reason for calling.
- Try to pinpoint when the person you wish to speak to will return. Then YOU return the call.
- Once you have gotten through to the right person, identify yourself and indicate that you are following up on a letter (if that is the case).
- Have some questions prepared that relate to the organization--something you found out in your research (*i.e., new product, expansion of facilities, etc.*).
- Try not to drag out the conversation. Once you have established interest, get to the point.
- State that you are calling to find out if they have any immediate openings in your field or if they anticipate any openings in the near future.
- Try to arrange a meeting and suggest a time to discuss possible job opportunities.
- If there are no openings, inquire if they have any suggestions of other organizations that you might contact.

### Special Hints:

- Be firm, clear, and assertive. These are the qualities that are needed and sought after by employers.
- Be prepared to communicate the value and benefits you can bring to the employer. You have a clear reason for setting up the appointment because you have something to offer. You are not one of the many job seekers who is unprepared for an interview.
- If you are referred by someone else to the employer, be sure to give the referral's name.
- Role play the call with a friend.
- Keep your presentation short (about 1 minute).



### Personal Visit

- While the potential for "***being in the right place at the right time***" can be great, cold calling can be a tough, discouraging proposition. Being told "***no***" to your face is a major confidence-destroying experience.
- To be successful, you need to be prepared for anything (*i.e., filling out an application, getting screened initially, setting up a return appointment, etc.*).
- When conducting a personal visit, ask to see someone in a particular department. Try to have the name ahead of time.
- If you can't see the person right away, offer to wait.
- If waiting is not possible, try to make an appointment.
- Another option is to leave your resume and call back for an appointment.

## Applying to Advertised Job Leads

The preceding suggestions relate to contacting potential employers regarding job leads through all sources, such as advertisements, personal referrals, research or some other means. Following are some further tips, specifically related to applying to advertised job leads.

- Read the entire "Help-Wanted" section (A to Z) because ads are sometimes mis-classified. If searching online, do keyword searches, utilizing a variety of skill sets.
- Read every ad that seems at all relevant to your qualifications very carefully.
- Distinguish between absolute requirements and wishful thinking (words like "should have," "preferred," "helpful but not required" indicate wishful thinking, for example).
- Apply within 24 hours. The longer you wait, the more reasons you will find not to apply.
- Send a cover letter and a resume. Mention where you saw the ad in your cover letter.
- If it's a blind ad (where the employer's name is not listed) apply anyway. There are a variety of reasons why an employer might choose not to list their name.
- In the case of an ad placed by an employment agency, call first and try to schedule an appointment to meet with the person screening for that type of ad.

### Follow-up



- No matter what method of contact you use, maintain careful records. Develop a system to keep track of contacts with employers--including such information as date, person, result, current status, and next action.
- It is important to follow-up by letter or phone call on any contacts you have made, especially those in which you are most interested.
- If you have been asked to supply any information or to check back at a particular time, be sure to follow through.

### WHAT IS THE HIDDEN LABOR MARKET?



Seventy-five percent of the jobs available in any given area are not advertised in employment agencies (public or private), newspapers, or trade associations. So, how can you find out about these jobs?

Let's look at another type of search for a moment. Supposing you became ill and didn't have a family doctor. How do you find a good doctor to take care of your health needs? You could check the physicians' listings in the telephone directory or call the local medical bureau. BUT--the chances are pretty good

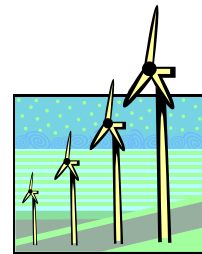


that you will first ask your friends, neighbors, or relatives who they would recommend. Right?

The Hidden Labor Market is built on this same principle--familiarity. If John Doe knows that one of his employees is leaving next month, his family, friends, business associates, and maybe even neighbors may know too. John has probably asked them if they know anyone who might fill his vacancy.

John prefers to hire someone who is recommended by someone he knows and trusts. Of course, John could place an "ad" in the local newspapers. How many responses do you suppose he would get? Would you like to screen them? Neither would he!

So the question is--**How Do I Become A Part Of This Referral System—  
The Hidden Labor Manpower Pool?**



1. Make a list of people to contact. Let your friends, neighbors and relatives know what type of work you are looking for.
2. Interview employers for information. Ask for the names of other employers to contact.
3. Circulate your Resume or Data Sheet.
4. Send thank you notes--for information, interviews and referrals.
5. Be **ENTHUSIASTIC** and follow-up on all leads.

### **HOW TO "NETWORK"**

Who do you know who might be able to help you find a job? Make a list here and make sure you actually get in touch with these people. This small network will help you find a job. You start building your network by listing all of the influential people you know such as:

- College classmates, professors, career services professionals
- Officers of professional organizations, whether you are a member or not
- Colleagues, past and present, and previous executives for whom you have worked
- Professional acquaintances: lawyers, stockbrokers, accountants, bankers, real estate brokers, church leaders, insurance agents, etc.
- Community members in clubs and/or associations of which you are a member, neighbors and local merchants
- Participants in professional meetings you have attended or plan to attend

- ❑ Editors and writers of trade journals

The names you develop from this list are your primary contacts, the ones you know directly, if even casually. While they seldom are the individuals who can offer you a job, they can prove valuable for expanding your network. Once you get an interview with your primary contact, the next step is to secure at least one or two secondary contacts. Once this bridge is made, you will find that your personal network will grow infinitely.

**Caution:** Don't let the primary contact send your resume directly to a secondary contact. If you don't take the new contact names with you, you put the control into someone else's hands, and you have no assurances that a follow-through will be forthcoming.

## POSSIBLE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING QUESTIONS

1. How did you get into this work?
2. What is a typical day like?
3. What are the frustrations?
4. What are the rewards?
5. What kind of academic/work background is necessary for people entering the field?
6. How much flexibility do you have regarding dress, hours of work, vacation schedule, place of residence?
7. To what professional organizations do you belong? Should I join now?
8. If you were starting out again, what would you do differently?
9. What is the potential for the field?
10. What areas do you feel promise the most growth?
11. What are the typical job titles in this field?
12. Who hires people to do this kind of work?
13. Would you recommend graduate or professional school training right after college, sometime in the future, or not at all?
14. What are the opportunities for advancement in this field?
15. How would you advise I go about looking for an entry-level job in this field?



16. If you were to leave your kind of work, what other kind of work would attract you?
17. If you were hiring someone right now, what would be the most critical factors determining your selection?
18. What are entry-level salaries like in this field?

NOTE: Always ask a question in a way that is natural for you.

***\*\*Check out the Career Development Web Page for current information and events!\*\****

**[www.missouriwestern.edu/careerdevelopment](http://www.missouriwestern.edu/careerdevelopment)**

