



Proactive Job Search

One of the most effective ways to get a job is through targeting employers and reaching out to them. You're wasting time and energy if you just apply for any job opening you find on the Internet, even though you might feel like you're accomplishing something by sending out tons of resumes. Remember, more than 80% of job openings available are never advertised.

The time you spend upfront investigating companies will benefit you in the long run, because you won't be spending time and energy applying to companies that aren't a good fit. Instead, you will be applying for jobs at companies where you would like to work. If the company is a good match, it makes sense to target it as one of your employment goals. You will know that the company has the type of jobs you're looking for and that the employer's culture and mission match what you're seeking. You'll also be able to connect with people at the company who can help you secure an interview and give you a reference.

What is a target job search?

A target job search is where you determine which companies to pursue for employment. These companies may, or may not, have current openings in your designated field. You may be pleasantly surprised by a manager with an anticipated opening or a referral to a colleague.

During a targeted job search, you can contact employers through targeted mailing/emailing or cold calls.

- Targeted mailing involves sending your résumé and cover letter to a group of employers in the area who match your career interest. For example, if you were searching for a bank teller job, you would mail your résumé to a group of companies in a given city that typically hire bank tellers. This method of pursuing employers is most likely to secure you the sort of job in which you are most interested, and it is highly proactive.
- When you cold call an employer, or send an unsolicited résumé, you are also being proactive. You will stick out in the employer's mind much more than the average person who is applying for a job through a general website. The employer is also likely to believe that you are interested in them specifically. Furthermore, the employer is given the chance to evaluate whether or not they have a need – all without having to do any advertising, since you are going to the employer proactively.

How can I identify potential employers?

Develop a target list. Define the criteria (location, large/small, nonprofit, government, etc...) for your target list. Then research and find the names and locations of your target companies. Use Internet resources, job postings, and ask your network.

How do you find companies that are a good match? There are websites with lists of the best companies to work for. Fortune, for example, ranks companies by a variety of criteria, including the 100 best companies, the 500 top companies, blue ribbon companies, most admired companies, best small companies, and so on.

Your local Chamber of Commerce and Yellow Pages (review page 3) are an ideal resource for finding local companies. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has a directory you can search to find your local Chamber of Commerce. Then visit the Chamber's web site to see if there is a directory of local companies.

Professional associations typically have lists of member companies. Weddles has a directory of associations list by industry. Use it to find member companies at associations in your career field and/or industry.

A workable target list should consist of no more than 50-75 companies. Use these sources to identify your market.

Which ones to pursue?

Start with a few companies in your target list. Research these companies by looking at their website to understand their mission and values, Hoovers or yahoo finance or some other database to look up financials, read the most recent annual report (if public company) to understand their strategy and vision, check their website for PR articles and look up articles on Google News. This should give you a good understanding of the company's strengths and weaknesses so you can ask intelligent questions when you speak with an officer of the company. Set-up Google alerts on these companies so you can read any breaking news. Search them on Twitter and other social media sites to understand their social media presence.

Who's the hiring manager?

Next, you need to find contacts at the company who can help you get a foot in the door. Outreach to them letting them know of your interest and asking if they can help.

- **Networking...**do you (or anyone you know) know someone employed by the company or its divisions? Review our Networking packet on our website for more information.
- **Company Website...**go straight to the source. Top managers are often listed. Middle managers are harder to find. Check the company's site search or press release archives for management names (by position or name).
- **News...**management changes are often published in papers/trade journals. You can also run the company name with the department; sometimes you find people quoted.
- **Company/industry-specific directories...**management lists vary according to source. Assume all print sources (& most online databases) are out of date. Use the names you find as a starting point. Check with the company to see if that person is still employed in that position. If you cannot verify, it's okay to send to person listed in the book/database. Presumably the mail routes to the current manager.
- **Social Media:** Review the company's LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter pages if they have them. Review our Social Media document on our website.
- **Job Listings:** Visit the company website to review any open positions. Some companies have an employment section with current job openings and you may be able to apply directly online.

What if I'm considering a career change?

Informational interviewing is the key to transition. An information interview is not a job interview. It is a fact-finding exchange with an experienced manager in your target field or location. This exchange enables you to plan an effective course of action. Many professionals are willing to share their expertise with you. To learn more about this technique review the Informational Interviewing packet on our website. It is a great way to get contacts.

Keep in mind.

For many job-seekers, this aspect of job-hunting is the hardest thing to do. Perhaps we feel as though we are like telemarketers—and in a way, you are: You are calling with the intent of doing enough selling over the phone to get an interview.

While you will get more responses, keep in mind that the rejection rate is still going to be high — depending on your field and the demand for the type of job you are seeking. Even if you only get a few job interviews from this strategy, it is worth it.

IDENTIFYING ORGANIZATIONS

(More than 80% of job openings available are never advertised. These are some techniques to learn about these job openings.)

➤ **CHAMBER OF COMMERCE:** is a form of business network. Business owners in towns and cities form these local societies to pursue their own interests. Local businessmen are members, and they elect an executive council to run the chamber. **You can also benefit** by using the Chamber of Commerce by **identifying lists of companies that are in areas/specialties that interest you**. There are Chambers of Commerce for many states, cities and towns around the country.

** For any Chamber of Commerce around the country go to: www.chambersearch.com. Then choose the state that you want to search.

**To search Pennsylvania Chambers you can get there two different ways: choose PA from www.chambersearch.com or go to www.pachamber.org (select “membership directory-on left toolbar”; then search by zip code or click Local Chamber Listing).

Example of Search

1. Let's say you are interested in locating Public Relations Agencies in the Philadelphia area.
2. Go to www.chambersearch.com; click on **PA**; then click on Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce.
3. Once you get to www.greaterphilachamber.com; click on “**Membership**” then click on “**Membership Directory**”
4. Then select by “**Business Type**.” Scroll down until you see Public Relations Agencies.
5. You will then get a list of companies that are members of this chamber that fall under that category—public relations agencies. Research each of the individual ones and see which ones interest you.
6. Now you can see if you want to work there. You can check out the **individual company's website** to see if they list jobs on their website; or you can contact them to see if they have job openings in the area you are interested in and ask them who you should send your resume and cover letter to; also you can conduct informational interviews with someone from there. (Read Informational Interviewing Packet in Career Services.)

➤ **PHONE BOOK/YELLOW PAGES:** a telephone directory or section of a directory where business products and services are listed alphabetically. You can also benefit by using the Yellow Pages to identify lists of companies that are in areas/specialties that interest. Consider these websites:

- www.yellowpages.com/
- www.yellowbook.com/
- www.theyellowpages.com/