



CHAPTER

15

PROSPECTING FOR JOB LEADS: Sources – Systems – Agencies

Who can help me in the sourcing of job leads?

Your goal is to find job openings before they are ever advertised and initiate contact whenever you learn of any opening, whether advertised or not.

Where are the jobs? How do I locate the ones that are listed? This is often called prospecting.

One of the hardest parts of job hunting is just identifying people to contact about an interview. You may have an excellent resume, cover letter, and interview pitch, but those are not much use if you can't locate several hot job leads.

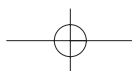
Most of us believe that we must know that a job exists before we attempt to contact a potential employer. Unfortunately, only a small percentage of jobs are ever listed.

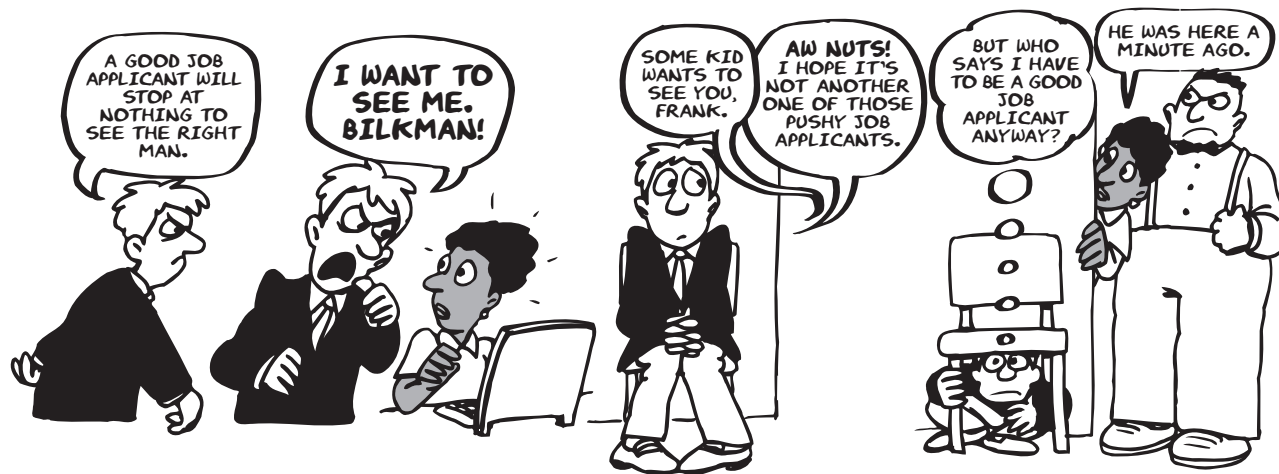
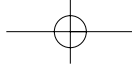
Most jobs are filled via word of mouth. It is unrealistic to assume that there must be a known job before you take time to talk to the employer.

This is not to suggest that no jobs are ever listed. Obviously, the web and newspapers list hundreds of jobs every day in classified ads. But the odds are long on you finding the ideal job that perfectly fits your background and interests using only that search strategy.

Any good job search strategy must take advantage of all employment options even if the odds might appear to be a long shot. You want to work smart in this effort. That means making direct contact with a potential employer, even if the odds are not in your favor.

Traditional job search methods take advantage of all job leads. Your traditional search strategy goes beyond just waiting for these job leads to be brought to your attention. It involves a proactive effort designed to flush out all such opportunities. Sourcing real job leads is a fundamental part of an effective job search strategy.





Job Lead Sources

How do you find out about job openings? The major sources are publications, the Internet, services, employers, contacts, and your own initiative. College Career services and search firms often do some of this work for you. They canvas potential employers and collect job openings. These services bring you and the employer together.

Job Websites. Are the days gone when your “perfect job” depended upon who you knew, how slick your resume was, clever ads to rifle through, and networking contacts? Probably not, but the job hunting rules have certainly changed with the introduction of the “World Wide Web” into your job search efforts.

A plethora of Internet sites have sprung up that offer job search information, resume advice, and job listings. Perhaps you want your mouse to do the walking.

Surfing for jobs is today’s reality. You must learn the ropes in this new job search world. The www brings together “job providers” and “job seekers” in a virtual HELP-WANTED and JOB-WANTED forum. Articles sharing career advice and job information abound on the web. Check out your various options.

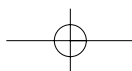
Search Services. Whether it is a college service, a government agency, or a private service, a search service is the most convenient and easiest way for you to seek employment. Your first step in using that process is to prepare for the interview. Much of the hard work of prospecting for job leads has already been done for you.

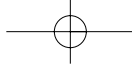
Why doesn’t everyone use only that approach then? A person is indeed foolish to not take advantage of this opportunity. Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons this does not work well for everyone.

Search services have access to only a limited number of jobs. At the entry level for business and engineering college graduates, less than half of the job openings are listed at colleges. The percentages go down drastically from there.

Don’t overlook the jobs that are listed. What are the best sources of listed jobs?

College career services and private employment services solicit job openings and provide these listings for you.





Experts suggest that fewer than 20 percent of all job openings are ever widely publicized. Services only get a portion of those because many employers advertise jobs themselves. Search services that are good at prospecting also get access to a few unpublished jobs as well.

The jobs that are listed with services are sought by almost everyone who is looking. Logic suggests that only the very best qualified candidates (however you measure best quality) get selected for interviews and offers. For the best qualified applicants, search services are ideal. Average candidates often have to look elsewhere.

Publications. Jobs are advertised, people like you apply, and offers are extended. Scouring want ads in newspapers, the web, trade magazines, association newsletters, and professional journals pays off for many candidates.

The purpose of an employment advertisement is to generate the largest possible pool of qualified candidates. By definition, about 90 percent of the people applying are screened out. Only the best 10 percent are screened in and interviewed.

Respondents to employment ads rarely fit the job descriptions perfectly. Most employers and applicants realize that there is some give and take on acceptance of qualifications. Whether the job market is soft or tight, only a few pass the screen.

Any time you see an employment advertisement that closely matches your credentials, you should send a cover letter and resume. For best results, write the cover letter and resume in such a manner that it is obvious to the employer that you have the perfect credentials requested.

This “force-fitting” yourself technique is the best way of assuring a positive reply. The total you, with all your assets and liabilities, will be discovered in the interview.

Get the interview; you can best defend your qualifications in a face-to-face setting. A simple piece of paper rarely talks back. You need to talk. Prove that you deserve an interview.

Some experts suggest waiting about one week after an ad runs to reply. The logic is that employers are flooded with applicants the day after the ad breaks. By waiting a few days, your resume will not be in the stack with hundreds of other replies and thus may get a more thorough review. The disadvantage to this approach is that you run the risk of the opening being filled by the time you apply.

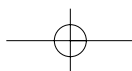
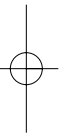
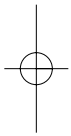
Do not wait to find a perfect match between the qualifications desired in an ad and your background. Play the odds. Your goal is to get as many interviews as possible. Therefore, you need to apply to ten job leads to obtain each interview.

If you are currently employed, you run a major risk of your current employer finding out that you are looking around. Few ads on the web or print media give employers’ names and addresses. They often give e-mail or post office box numbers. Because of this, you could unknowingly respond to your current employer’s ad. Screen job leads carefully.

One reason employers often use e-mail and post office boxes is to avoid tarnishing their names. Many firms do not ever reply to people answering blind ads. One ad in a Sunday edition of a large metropolitan newspaper will

Respond to all relevant want ads but realize that only a small percentage are called for an interview.

*Respond to all ads **immediately** even if you are only marginally qualified.*





Responding to blind ads runs the risk of your employer indirectly discovering that you are looking for another job.

generate 300 to 500 responses, depending upon the supply and demand situation for the listed opening. Obviously, an employer must be slow in responding. They often respond to only the most likely matches.

Most ads are placed by human resource departments. In many cities there is an association of employment managers who tend to know each other well. They may be friends outside the job. The grapevine may spread the fact that you are looking around.

Whenever you reply to an ad, you run the risk of your employer learning of your action. Be prepared to explain this to your employer.

Personal Contacts. Your best source of job leads is your personal contacts. When you are ready to begin your job lead development activity, it is time to call your contacts. Personal visits to them or telephone calls asking if they know of specific job openings is in order.

Contacts should be used frequently and regularly to help generate job prospects. Weekly calls or e-mails about your progress may turn up many "no's," but they keep your contacts informed of your status. The e-mails give them a chance to do some digging on your behalf, which most are willing to do when you ask.

Your contact network should produce a number of excellent job leads. Your network partners are the group most likely to refer you to friends of friends and keep your resume moving.

Employer's Applicant Sources

How do employers find applicants? What sources do they use? If you know a little bit about their business, you have a better chance of adopting a strategy to fit your circumstances.

There are seven basic sources available to employers. Which source they use depends on the type of job, the level of responsibility (salary level), and the supply of candidates in the community. The seven primary sources are listed in Figure 15.1.

A very high percentage of entry-level hires in business and technical fields come from college campuses through on-campus interviewing or job listings

Seven Major Job Lead Sources

- College recruiting (local or national)
- Referrals (internal or external)
- Advertisements (web or print)
- Walk-ins (HRD or Manager)
- Write-ins (cover letters or e-mail)
- Search firms (open or retained)
- Career Fairs (open or pre-selected)

Figure 15.1

on campus. A high percentage of the jobs requiring one to ten years of experience are filled by private search firms. The middle of the market is in the \$30,000–\$80,000 salary range for technical, professional, and managerial openings.

Referrals come from employees and friends of the organization. Referrals and write-ins constitute the largest percentage of hires in the mid-range group and a smaller, but important, percentage of hires for top-paying jobs.

Because of the discouraging nature of the approach for the applicant and time commitment required by the employer, few hires result from walk-ins in all categories. Even unsolicited write-ins produce few hires for employers.

Advertisements, web or print, are usually used only as a last resort. When the supply of applicants is very low, a need to advertise becomes evident. Advertising is normally confined to highly skilled technical people and sales personnel in the middle and upper ranges of exempt personnel. Due to the cost and large number of responses from unqualified applicants, as an employer, you will advertise as a last resort and then only for applicants in very short supply.

Classifying Job Leads

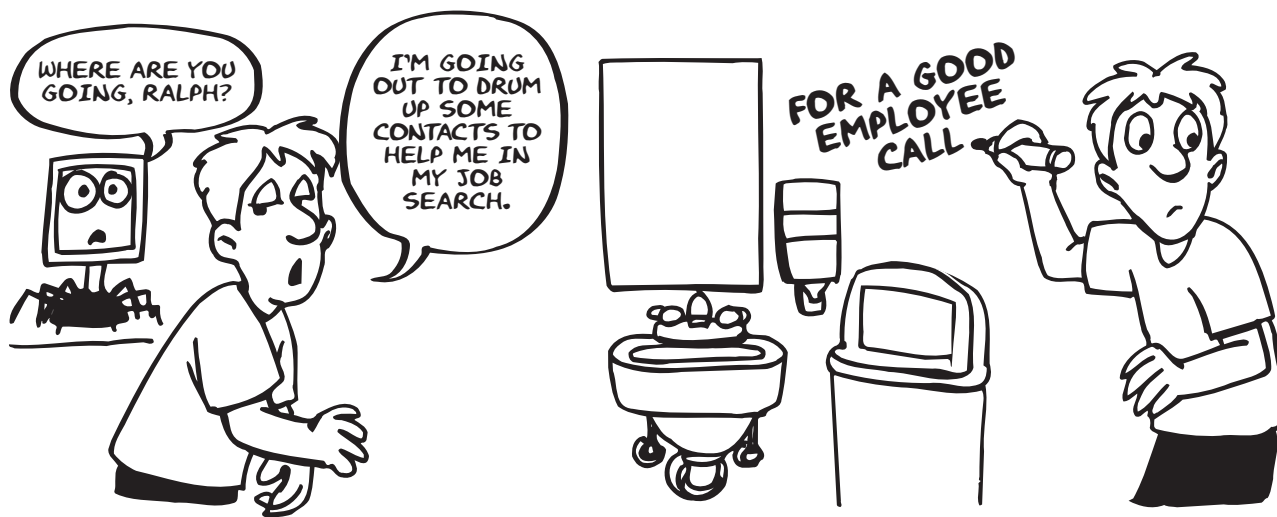
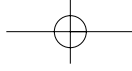
Job leads are the bread and butter of your job search, and they are what you are working to find. When you discover a job lead, your mission is to convert the lead into an interview. The action you take immediately upon learning of an opening is critical.

How swiftly you respond and how much time you devote to your strategy of responding should relate to your perception of how important the job is to you and of how “hot” the lead is. Some leads need to be followed up more quickly than others, so you need to be able to read “temperatures.”

Hot Leads. Extremely hot leads are those you receive through your contacts, advertisements, listings from a search service, or direct referrals. On hot leads, you call for an appointment within the hour. If a letter and resume are requested, you personally deliver them if possible.

Your goal is to obtain an interview that day or, at the latest, the next day. The very best jobs are often filled within hours.

Large well-known firms rarely advertise except in situations where applicants are very scarce. Smaller firms advertise more frequently.



Lukewarm Leads. Employers who advertise in annuals, journals, association newsletters, and other publications with a week or more lead time before printing, are usually not in a hurry to fill their jobs. They want to develop a good pool of applicants, review them, and select the best to interview.

You want your resume to get into the pool. Sending it immediately is not necessary in most cases. Since you have some time, find out through web reviews, telephone calls, and personal contacts as much information as you can about the opening.

After you know precisely what the employer is seeking, write your cover letter and resume to fit the opening. Make your qualifications appear to be most outstanding and a perfect match to the job description.

Lukewarm leads are common for jobs with government agencies, teaching jobs, and training programs. The employer may not be sure of the exact nature and number of the job openings, but usually there are several openings when such an ad is placed.

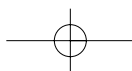
Job Leads as Prospects

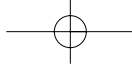
There are several different types of prospects. Prospects are job leads and potential job leads. Some prospects are more important to you than others.

Prospects come from search services, the Internet, publications, and personal contacts. Through one of these sources you will learn that a job or potential job opening exists.

Your mission is to establish a system of sourcing job leads and then building, maintaining, and following-up on all of your job leads. There are many methods of accomplishing this recordkeeping function. Keep the leads current and well organized.

Many good leads disappear through lack of management care. Leads get lost and turn stale quickly. You need a support system that organizes the nitty-gritty filing so that your daily activity can automatically return to prospects and keep them active.





Published Sources of Job Leads

- The Internet (direct or via vendors)
- Metropolitan newspaper classifieds
- National newspaper classifieds
- Small-town newspapers
- Financial newspapers
- Business magazines
- Trade association publications
- Professional association publications
- Industry trade magazines
- Technical journals
- Employment agencies
- College Career Service offices
- Career fairs/conferences
- Search firm websites

Figure 15.2

Job Prospect File. A prospect file is a collection of all of your job leads. It differs from your network partners in that it is used for a different purpose. Your network is an information-generating and advice-seeking collection of important networking partners.

Your prospect file is a collection of individual names and specific organizations who may have specific job possibilities for you. It is a product of your networking.

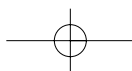
Building a prospect file requires an approach similar to that for building your network partners, but their purposes make the two lists substantially different. Your prospect file lists the names of bona fide employment prospects.

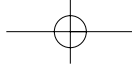
Many network partners are not employment prospects. Conversely, many names in your prospect list are not on your network partners list and never should be. There could be some overlap in names but that is not the norm.

Classification. You should maintain your prospect files in an electronic organizer, like Outlook. These prospects may be classified as hot, lukewarm, cold, and terminated prospects.

The purpose of using a system is to have the capability of shuffling through them on a daily basis.

New leads, from whatever source, immediately become your hottest prospects. The hot prospect file is worked regularly; usually daily. You are talking to or have recent correspondence out to these people. You may have had interviews with them and/or are waiting for replies.





Common Job Prospecting Mistakes

What can you do to generate job leads?

Prospecting for job leads and interviews is never a fun job for anyone. Even with the best of friends, relationships, solid leads, and a very supportive environment, this can be a discouraging task. No one likes to be turned down for an appointment.

Your plan is important in turning the writing, telephoning, and personal visits into a more pleasant activity. Unfortunately, many job hunters even dislike asking for advice. There is no good way to avoid the very personal nature of prospecting and relationship development.

It helps if you understand the pitfalls that others have experienced. Anticipating problems and taking action to avoid them improve the success of your job search.

Wrong Assumptions:

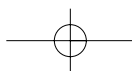
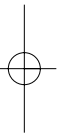
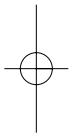
- *The acquaintance knows your background.* You must explain your credentials.
- *The person understands what you want.* You must state your job goals succinctly.
- *The contact has read your resume.* You must review it with them.
- *You are capable of winging a conversation.* You must plan your presentation and approach carefully.
- *The employer is rejecting you personally.* It is your credentials, not you, that are not as competitive as others.
- *People will do what they say.* You must initiate most follow-ups and be persistent.
- *Your job goals are clear.* Your integrity depends on specific, delineated goals.

Overreliance:

- *The search firm will get you a job.* Your personal efforts are far more likely to produce results.
- *The job for you will be advertised.* Over 80 percent of job openings are never advertised.
- *An offer from a specific employer is imminent.* The offer is not an offer until all details are closed conclusively, so do not stop looking.
- *The salary will be competitive.* Premature discussion can be damaging, but never to bring it up is foolish.

Wrong assumptions and overreliance kill prospecting hopes frequently. There is a strong human tendency to wait and hope. Actions speak louder than hopes.

Be aware of the pitfalls of prospecting. Plan ahead.





The lukewarm prospect file contains job leads that you have worked but are now getting old. On a less frequent basis you go through these and recontact the employers. You may be on an active "hold" status with some of these employers. You may use a weekly status update.

The cold prospect file contains those leads that still have some spark of life but are not very promising. Perhaps, for example, an employer never responded to your inquiry, but you have some reason to believe that you are still being considered. In another case, the employer may have told you your qualifications look great, but that the timing is not right; you have been told that there is a reasonable chance that something will materialize later. The cold prospects are not likely to turn into interviews, but they may.

You do not delete this file.

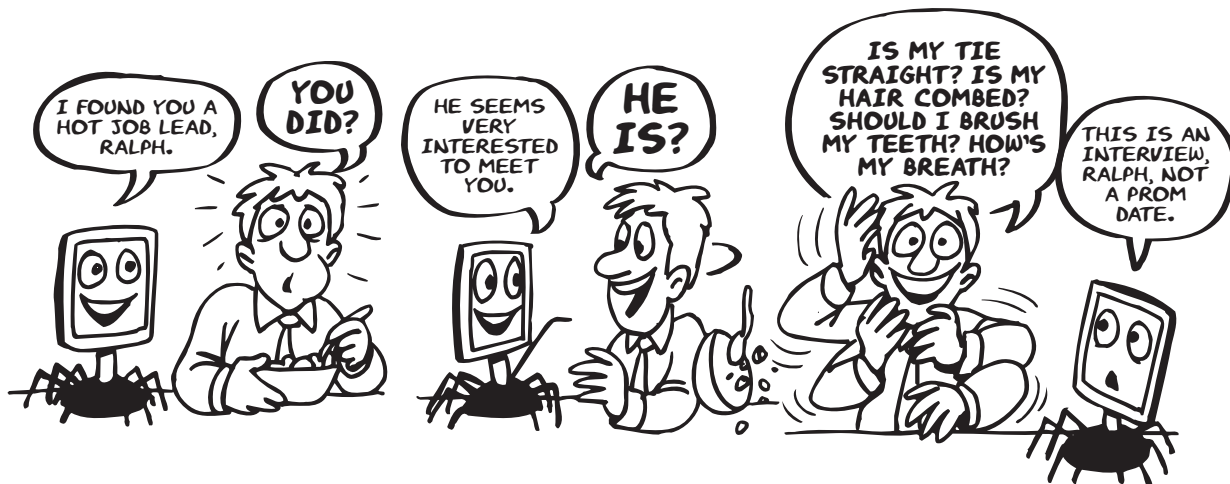
The termination section contains the burned-out job leads. You received a "no interest" response before or after the interview. You know that the "hold your resume in file" phrase is worthless.

All old leads (those 60 days or older) eventually rest in this classification. You do not want to throw these away because some of them might rekindle, and they contain excellent information for a review and evaluation of your job search strategy on a periodic basis. For some old terminated or cold leads the timing could just be off. In different times, you might have gotten the job.

Content. Prospect files should contain: organization, division, branch, personal name, personal title, address, city, state, zip code, e-mail, and telephone. Each time you have any type of contact with the employers, it must be noted with the date, person, result, current status, and expected next action.

This includes both your contacting of the employer and the employer's contact with you. If you have had an interview, you should record your impressions of the interview.

The prospect file should be updated daily during an active job search campaign. The file is a running summary of your discussions, which can be readily accessed and evaluated.



Your prospect cards must be “worked” every day and updated regularly.

File Folders. When you have two or more pieces of correspondence from an employer or just before you have an interview, a file folder should be prepared for the employer. These folders are kept separate from the prospect file and contain much more detail.

Those (alphabetically maintained) folders are not something you shuffle through on a daily basis, but you do refer to them whenever you write, interview, or receive correspondence from an employer.

The main function of the prospect file is to organize your approach in dealing with potential employers. It provides a system for classifying your job leads.

Some priorities in terms of quality and timing must be established in order to avoid spending too much time on your less promising leads. Use whatever approach makes you comfortable. The key is “be organized.”

Prospect File

Classification _____

Name _____ Title _____

Organization _____

Address _____ Phone _____

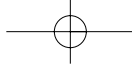
E-Mail _____

Job Title and Description _____

Date	Person Contacted	Result, Status, and Next Action
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Do you have an organized way of classifying and tracking your job leads?

Figure 15.3



Contacting Prospects: Doing Your Research

Prospecting is sourcing the job leads and then turning the lead into a bona fide job opening. Leads, including job opening advertisements, do not turn into a job offer without a preliminary interview and subsequent secondary interviews.

You must do two things. First, you must investigate the lead until you discover for certain that there is a real job opening. Second, you must be one of the few applicants who gets the opportunity to interview for the bona fide job opening.

Many employers simply pass the word along that a job opening may be forthcoming. They may be in the process of getting an “opening approved” through their superiors but they have confidence that the opening will eventually materialize. Their pre-advertisement reason for “passing the word” is to get a feel for the strength and quality of the potential applicant pool.

Many employers prefer to interview for “anticipated” openings. They may not have an immediate opening but realize that the business is growing and that within a reasonable period of time an opening will be created. Others realize that turnover is inevitable, and they want to maintain a reasonable size applicant pool so that if someone leaves after giving only a two-week notice, the pool can be quickly accessed.

Some employers interview for training programs. They know that the organization typically hires a number of entry-level management trainees into a given function. The openings typically occur around January and June when many college graduates complete their degrees.

Anticipatory interviewing is not the norm but it is not unusual either. The majority of employers interview applicants only when they know that a job opening exists. Since the opening needs to be filled as soon as possible, the “interviewing window” for a given job may only be two or three weeks long.

What is the status of each of your job leads?

Timing. Timing is what makes job hunting so difficult. Being at the right place at the right time makes a great deal of difference. Candidates who are available are the only ones interviewed. Better candidates might be available, but the timing may not be appropriate and both the candidate and employer lose.

Ironically, employers do not want to hire unemployed candidates. The assumption is that they do not have a job because of a lack of strong credentials (otherwise, they would be employed). This vicious cycle hurts unemployed job hunters.

The “golden rule” is to never quit one employer until you have another job already lined up.

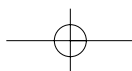
It is better to be working part-time in a job beneath your capabilities than to be unemployed. It is better to be in school and working part-time than to be unemployed.

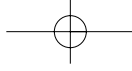
Prospecting is part of the interview research process. It can be done via telephone, e-mail, in person, or on the Internet.

A personal, unannounced drop-in or walk-in does not have a high success rate. However, if you are the type of person who tends to make a very

Timing plays a significant role in the hiring decision.

Prospecting is an aggressive approach which works!





Breaking the Gatekeeper Screen

A major job duty of a personal assistant is to protect the time of superiors. Whether you are contacting the personnel department or a functional line operating manager, you will inevitably have to deal with the “assistant” screen.

Your goal is to avoid the block and persuade the assistant to give you a few minutes of time. Expect to be asked about the nature of your call. Some of the most common responses are as follows:

- Indicate personal: “A mutual friend, Dr. Smith, suggested . . .”
- Telephone tag: “We have been missing each other . . .”
- Returning call: “She called me on . . .”
- Correspondence follow-up: “Regarding the letter he wrote . . .”
- Establish rapport: “Strike up conversation with secretary”
- Embarrass: “Has not returned three other calls and . . .”
- Busy schedule: “I am tough to reach so . . .”
- No message: “When is a good time to call back?”
- Direct: “Seeking an appointment. Can you . . .”
- Message: “I am seeking . . . and . . . please call on . . .”
- Polite: “Keep missing each other”
- Friendship: “Can you help me with . . .”

The gatekeeper can be your best ally if you establish a proper dialogue. You will likely talk to this person several times before you get the appointment and after the interview. Try to establish a positive relationship so that once you break the initial barrier, follow-up contacts will be much smoother.

pleasing first impression and if you can get to the decision-maker, this cold calling often works well. Most employers like to see the hard-charger, go-getter, want-the-job type of job applicant.

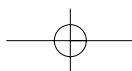
The most difficult part of the walk-in is getting past the clerical screen of protection. If you have patience, it may be right for you.

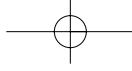
The purpose of prospecting is to obtain an interview appointment. Without adequate research, getting the appointment is very difficult.

Prospecting and researching takes planning if it is to be successful. You could find yourself in the midst of an interview for which you are unprepared. In such a case, even though you would have succeeded in the battle to obtain the interview, you could lose the war because the interview could be a real flop.

You need to be prepared to fill out an application, get screened initially, and set up a return appointment.

Personal prospecting works. People do get hired this way every day. This method is not popular among technical, professional, and managerial hires. When it is successful, it requires finesse. Being told “no” to your face is a major confidence-destroying experience. Can you handle this type of situation?





Cold calling can work. It is threatening. It takes guts. Only aggressive people try it. Ironically, that is a quality that employers like to see in applicants.

It works because you show up at the right place at the right time. When some openings materialize, employers cannot afford to go through a long, drawn-out search process. They sometimes hire on the spot.

The supervisor may need a new person immediately and pressures mount fast if it is a key job. Even if you are not the perfect match but you are available immediately and have training potential, an employer may hire you.

Walk-ins often immediately get to see the chief decision-maker. Busy people often do not like to get locked into an appointment schedule, and they tend to postpone setting up job interview appointments. If a person is right there, many will take a break from the routine and talk to the person.

Getting to see the decision-maker on the spot is important. If he or she happens to like you, other candidates for the assignment may never get to see the employer. Cold calling frequently puts you near an important power figure.

Cold Call Techniques. Whether you are requesting an informational interview, a job interview, or just some job facts, there will be times when you must make cold calls. Some of the key opening introductions start like the following.

Hello, my name is . . .

I am graduating in . . .

I got your name from . . .

I am interested in a career in . . .

Do you have time right now to . . .

What advice would you have . . .

Could we discuss this further on . . .

My qualifications are . . .

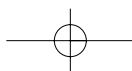
Who else would be good for me to . . .

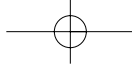
You need a script. Don't make cold calls without a planned presentation. Your goal is to get an appointment. Don't oversell yourself. Move to closure quickly by requesting a 20 minute appointment.

The person or the "gatekeeper" will almost always say that there is no time available. You often get two or three additional "objections" before you are able to schedule an appointment. You must be prepared to add additional information and ask for the appointment again and again. Only ask for 20 minutes. You only need a brief face-to-face meeting with enough time to give your career-related competencies so your value to the employer or career field can be recognized.

This is not a typical interview. If there is further interest in you after your appointment, an interview with this contact, or someone else, will almost always come later.

For some candidates, the telephone request may result in more real interviews than any other non-face-to-face approach. You have no way to deal with "objections" in a cover letter, e-mail, or website submission. It is very difficult to get an appointment. Perseverance on paper rarely succeeds and it very frequently succeeds on the telephone and in person.





The gatekeepers will shield the decision-maker's time. You must reach the decision-maker for an appointment even if you bypass the gatekeeper. Call at least once a day for two weeks until your persistence pays off. Send follow-up information and thank you e-mails to the gatekeeper or decision-maker. Be nice. They can be your friend or foe.

Name dropping can help if done in a humble manner. Make sure to point out that this is not about getting a job interview. You want information. You only need 20 minutes. You always hear that there are "no job openings right now." Your goal is to learn about the future openings that the decision-maker knows might occur, even if in another organization.

Your goal is an appointment; not a job interview by telephone or in person. You simply want to have time to present your interests, competencies, and get known by the decision-maker. That cannot be done well by telephone. Expect the telephone hurdle to be high but all that can happen to you is a **no interest** reply. That is painless. Persistence will pay off.

Once you have the appointment, a whole different set of tactics is needed that are shared with you elsewhere in this book. Before your appointment, a thank you e-mail confirming the time and place is essential. If appropriate, attach a cover letter and resume.

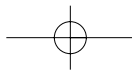
Nothing beats calling to set up appointments. Cold calling is never fun but is works ten times better than anything else. Use it often in your job search planning efforts.

Telephone Prospecting. If you use the telephone (instead of walking in) there can be less tension. Are you more comfortable at talking on the telephone?

Deliver Your Telephone Message

Purpose: Seeking a job Plan to change jobs Need your help Seeking advice	Why changing: Graduating New challenges Advancement Completed major task Good timing Family or Health More money Security	Close: Suggest an appointment time
Plan: Advising key people Interest in you No hurry Time table	Request: Explore options with you Seek advice from you	Follow-up: Confirming letter Cover letter Resume Request in writing
Goal: Type of job Locations desired Industry concerns Organizations like	Sales Pitch: Deliver one minute presentation	

Figure 15.4



Telephone Tips

- Rehearse presentation (recorder)
- Plan every call outline
- Limit call to five minutes
- Avoid complete interview
- Introduce yourself
- Establish mutual interest
- State purpose
- Deliver sales message
- Ask for appointment
- Suggest time
- Confirm follow-up meeting
- Leave re-contact open
- Thank for time

Figure 15.5a

The worst possible outcome is that your prospect will say “no, I cannot see you now.”

Prospecting is preferable for people who just cannot tolerate the uncertain wait common with direct-mail job search strategies. They feel that they must be doing something positive, even if it means facing several face-to-face turn-downs each day.

Common search courtesy suggests that you should try to get an appointment first, but some busy people do not like to bother with appointments. They feel that if you really want the job you should be willing to wait on their doorstep until they can work you into their busy day.

If you employ this assertive search strategy, you should seriously consider establishing a daily call routine. Force yourself to *always* contact at least five different employers each day.

Make good notes after each contact and always follow up in five to seven days (one week later). You may have received a “no,” but persistence often pays. The employer may like your desire, organization, and persistence and give you a chance after a little reflection.

The five visits each day plus the weekly follow-up often pay handsome dividends. Very few employers will be rude to you, but they can be firm, especially the second time.

You must prepare yourself for a tough mental challenge. If you have a thin skin, this approach may not be for you. If you can develop a tough attitude, you will be

amazed at how many people you will impress.

Employers like to make quick employment decisions. Dragging the process out is no more acceptable to them than it is to you. The person present and available immediately most often gets the job even though he or she may not be the very best qualified applicant.

The bottom line in any search strategy is job interviews. Your prospecting actions boil down to three activities with potential employers.

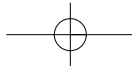
- Writing (snail, e-mail, or Internet response)
- Telephoning (from your research efforts)
- Visiting (based upon a success assessment)

Prospecting and research converts your leads into interviews. The telephone becomes your best ally.

Your job lead provides you with a name and telephone number. If you did not obtain the specific name of the key contact, try to obtain it. The simplest way to obtain it is to call the organization’s receptionist and ask for the name and number of the person heading up the function where your new job is likely to be.

If that does not work, call the HR office and explain your situation. One of their functions is to help you reach the proper person. Your goal is to get an interview with the key decision-maker in the department or unit to which you

Use the telephone and e-mail to set up the details such as the time and place of the meeting.



Telephone Manners

- Brief greeting
- Friendly tone
- Nice day
- Establish rapport first
- Polite and patient
- “Good time?”
- Short commercial
- Mutual acquaintances
- Appreciation

Figure 15.5b

are seeking entry. If that fails, the personnel department may help you get your foot in the door.

You want to avoid a lengthy telephone interview with anyone. The best plan is to get a face-to-face meeting so that you can present your qualifications and interact in the most favorable light. Rarely can you obtain a job offer after a telephone interview.

An air of confidence, tact, and a positive mental attitude will suffice on the telephone. Sometimes your telephone technique can hurt you. If you feel you might have that problem, the best solution is advance preparation. Think of the possible questions you will face and have answers for them ready. Try to maintain control by moving toward setting up a specific time for an interview.

Your goal on the telephone is to establish a specific time and date for an interview.

The best laid plans sometimes fall apart in the reality test. Because of their fear of failure, some people fail

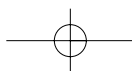
without ever playing the game. If your plan is established, you must at least give prospecting a fair chance of succeeding.

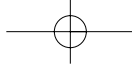
You have worked hard to generate job leads and convert these into specific interviews. Your next task is to make all of your interviews turn into job offers. Several informational websites like www.careermag.com will help you with more ideas.

Telephone Screen Interviews. Potential employers and headhunter's often just desire to briefly investigate whether or not your competencies justify the use of a valuable face-to-face appointment time. The telephone screen interview is used to assess whether your qualifications will make a good use of the decision-maker's time.

When you receive the headhunter telephone call, or that of the gatekeeper, you must recognize that this is a basic qualification screen. The first task is to determine your level of interest in terms of job change readiness, interest in the new employer, industry, job description, and salary range.

Try to avoid getting screened out by a telephone interview.





You should have a 60-second self-selling talk ready to deliver. Your response is needed in a brief sound bite just like you deliver at job fairs, networking encounters, and to initial interviewers when you get the question: "tell me about yourself."

Do not leave your reply to accident. You could be having a bad day. Be consistent. What are your key selling points? How can you tease the caller and yet not tell your whole life story? You want an interview, not someone to make a "not interest" decision based upon a telephone call.

The goal of both parties is to preselect each other to determine if an in-person follow-up interview is appropriate. What are your best competencies that you want to share in the brief 10-minute telephone call? Let the recruiter do the talking first. Get the facts about the job. Ask questions. Determine your level of interest before you talk. Then give career highlights and important accomplishments. Don't get into supporting details. Ask for a salary range and close out the conversation if there is no further interest.

A well-trained recruiter will always ask: "Is this a good time to talk?" Don't talk if others can overhear your confidential remarks. One strategy is to always alibi, let them talk, and then get callback details. This gives you time to analyze and prepare some remarks if you are really interested in this job. Set up a formal time for your next call.

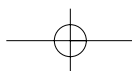
Call from a quiet comfortable environment in which you feel at ease.

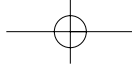
Prospect Career Action Project

Prospect File Project. Develop a 100-name job prospect file based on your career job objectives. Use at least three different sources for the development of job leads. For each contact, indicate the information suggested in the text and summarize as much information as you know about each job. Use a copy of Figure 15.3 in creating this database or something like an Outlook contact file.

Select three of your hottest job leads and write a cover letter and resume for each. Indicate that you will be calling within a reasonable period of time.

Recontact each of the prospects within four weeks by telephone or e-mail. Do your best to obtain appointments. Evaluate the process that you have just





gone through. Is it something useful for you that you wish to continue or is it a waste of time in your unique situation?

Prepare a one minute telephone opener. Open with a greeting, present a personal message, make a request, and close with a confirming follow-up.

Set up a "Prospect File" for your three best leads. Record each of your follow-up actions. Include the job description, job title, and other relevant facts. Each file should also contain your cover letters, e-mails, resume, and notes resulting from each contact. A hypothetical project like this prepares you for the real situation where you will do this for real results many times in your career. This strategic planning will help.

Search Firm Services

Employment services are designed to support your efforts in prospecting for job leads.

The degree to which you use a search firm service is a matter of personal choice based upon your perception of the cost/benefit ratio. The obvious benefit is the sourcing of jobs. The cost is computed in terms of the time and money one invests in utilizing search services. Rarely will you have to pay a fee.

Search services are used by many employers. Some employers use them exclusively to avoid the initial screening process. They find it less expensive to let another party handle that phase of selection for them. They essentially outsource this function to save costs.

Search services can be valuable for you. Employment services include college career services, employment agencies, executive search firms, government agencies, private career assessment and counseling services, Internet vendors, and paper processing operations. They are another tool in your search.

Search services perform a brokering and advising service.

College Career Services Office (CSO)

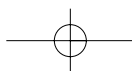
The college career office (CSO) is an organization located on campus with the express purpose of getting potential employers together with potential candidates. Depending upon the college or university, the services that are provided vary widely, but most of them offer on-campus interviewing with employers, career counseling, and job referral. Most offer services to both current students and alumni.

College career services provide extensive aids to assist you in your career planning efforts. Most have areas where you can go to read employment brochures, annual reports, access the Internet, current job listings, and offer descriptions of hundreds of jobs as well as the standard sources of names for various employing organizations.

Most provide considerable assistance in accessing the world wide web for employment purposes.

There are usually very low charges for assistance to either the registrant or the employer.

Most of the major employers in the United States work through and cooperate fully with college career offices. Both are members of a nonprofit professional organization called the *National Association of Colleges and Employers*. *NACE* publishes a code of ethics to which both parties subscribe. Forms are jointly developed by the parties and are standardized throughout the nation.





The college CSO provides a number of services that are free (or nearly free). As appropriate, the major services—including campus interviewing, referring, counseling, web access, job listings, and career libraries—should definitely be utilized. These services should make your college placement office high on your list of resources to use.

JOB WEB

www.jobweb.com

Professional association/gateway to career info/self-assessment tests/job choice magazines/international articles/company profiles/designed for students, employers, and career professionals.

Campus Interviews. For most graduates, on-campus interviewing is one of the easiest and most effective means for landing the first assignment after college. Alumni under 30 years old can also find this system useful if they are seeking entry-level positions.

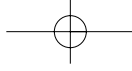
Employers often prefer to fill their needs through on-campus interviewing for a number of reasons. They can see large numbers of applicants at a time, it is inexpensive for them as compared to other means, and they see the top talent in the nation first.

Some employers have hundreds of job openings located throughout the country. Their college recruiting is usually national in scope, and these large employers refer graduates to several different locations after initial on-campus interviews.

Most other methods of employment are localized, and applicants must be available in the geographical areas of the openings. Employers often pay for your transportation to a second interview that can be hundreds of miles away if you were first interviewed on campus.

Teams of college recruiters usually visit campuses during the fall months of October, November, and December. During the spring, they are on campuses during January, February, and March to hire spring and summer graduates as well as interns.





Although the policies at schools differ, most spring graduates register for assistance near the beginning of the last year in school. Many take interviews both in the fall and spring periods.

Students who wait until one or two months before graduation to contact employers have a far tougher time finding employment. An early start is a good idea.

Employers often try to fill all of their openings through college recruiting by April; therefore, there are few professional jobs left for late applicants. Those individuals about to graduate must plan early for the better opportunities.

Referrals. Not all college career offices operate extensive on-campus recruiting programs. The number of graduates at some schools is not large enough to attract large numbers of employers, and the mix of academic majors may not be in high-demand fields.

The roles of career professionals at small colleges and liberal arts schools are somewhat different from those of directors at large universities and in business and engineering curriculums. They serve as referral agents for graduating students and do much more individual counseling and advising.

Professionals at these smaller, primarily liberal arts institutions maintain close touch with alumni, local employers, and a selected group of national employers. Referrals to job possibilities are handled on a personal basis.

You must get to know the counseling staff on a personal basis. Only if the staff knows you well will they place their credibility on the line with employers.

The one-on-one personal referral is often more effective than mass interviewing. The referral approach accomplishes the same goal; it gets you interviews.

Counseling Service. The career service office is not simply an agency that lines up interviews. The key to finding success in a career assignment lies in prior preparation. The career office assists you in many ways by offering job search advice, job leads, group programs, personal counseling, and web access.

Many people engaged in the job search process find themselves making the same mistakes as their predecessors. College career professionals see common mistakes repeated over and over. The college career counselor is in a unique, pivotal position.

Whether you are an alumnus or a current student, you will find that their advice is some of the best available anywhere at any price. Use it.

Job Listings. As has been pointed out earlier, not all employers recruit on campus. Many prefer to send career professionals a list of their openings every month or so. Others send a letter, e-mail, or telephone message when an opening requiring an inexperienced graduate or experienced alumnus materializes. Many universities permit an employer to upload job opening announcements directly to their website.

All career service offices publish and/or post job openings on their websites with the information needed for contacting these employers directly.

Student Center

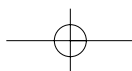
www.studentcenter.com

Career advice/internships/free newsletter/articles/chatroom/alliances.

Career Services at the larger universities often schedule several thousand interviews each year and refer hundreds of resumes using sophisticated computer referral systems.

Graduates from smaller colleges need to get well acquainted with the counseling staff because referrals are made on a very personal basis.

Job search advice and personal counseling aid thousands of college graduates every year.



Your career services office publishes a list of jobs on a regular basis.

Publications. The CSO distributes many informative materials on employers. Those materials are available through the career service office career libraries. These are an important part of your job prospecting.

The materials give the current names and addresses of the people to contact in hundreds of employing organizations. Many employers advertise in them. They identify types of positions, employers, and are cross-classified by college major and geographical location.

Career service offices keep a wide variety of literature available for reference. Most major government and corporate employers keep the CSO well supplied with recruitment brochures.

Even for new graduates undecided about careers, these can be helpful because they often discuss the duties, responsibilities, future potential, and qualifications for many different types of openings. The pictures and descriptive materials help provide focus on given fields.

Most offices also have on reference a copy of the Department of Labor's two-inch-thick *Occupational Outlook Handbook* and the special edition of it, which is directed to college graduates. It is also on the web.

The *Handbook* contains several hundred job titles with descriptions for each of the work involved, the places of employment, qualifications, earnings, employment outlook, and sources of additional information. It is a useful planning tool. This is also on the web at www.careeronestop.org.

You should cultivate a working relationship with your college's career professional staff. They personally know hundreds of employers and their recommendation can secure an interview for you.

As good as it is, however, you cannot rely solely on your college career service. What works well for some people may not work well for you.

If you have less than five years of work experience, use the office on an aggressive basis. The more work experience you have, the more you should incorporate other approaches into your job campaign.

Search Firms

A search firm professional is a person who maintains two files: one of job openings and one of applicants. In an ideal situation these two lists match, but in reality this is seldom the case. Firms solicit job listings and candidates and try to match them.

The employment counselor is many times a salesperson working for two parties at the same time. The counselor may try to convince you to take a job that requires fewer skills than you possess (downgrade), and/or convince an employer to accept a compromise applicant.

Career counselors are often caught up in the role of salesperson because they work on commission and make their living only when creating job/applicant matches. Recognize this dual role as you use them.

Firms build up their candidate files by placing newspaper ads offering nice-sounding jobs to stimulate your interest. They build up their job files by contacting employers on a regular basis asking for openings.



Specialized Employment Agencies

- Accounting
- Financial institutions
- Data processing
- Engineering
- Sales and marketing
- Health organizations
- Government
- Human Resources
- Education

Figure 15.6

Many firms supplement their matching business by having applicants sign contracts for certain resume, testing, and counseling services. Even if employers pay the “placement fees,” applicants may pay for these other services.

Registration fees are considered unethical. Before signing a contract with one of the firms, make certain that all of your questions have been completely and adequately answered. The law is “let the buyer beware.”

Professional search firms normally confine their search for jobs to a “local” area. Usually only local employers list with them. If there are branch offices in other cities, arranging for interviews in those other areas is difficult. You might as well go to the other city and work with an agency there. The “executive” search firms tend to be more national and even international in scope.

The service level you receive largely depends upon the level of interest that your career advisor, the sales representative at the firm, shows in your talents. If you appear qualified for opportunities that are available in

their listings, you will see greater interest shown to you because the firm will earn a commission if you accept one of the listed jobs.

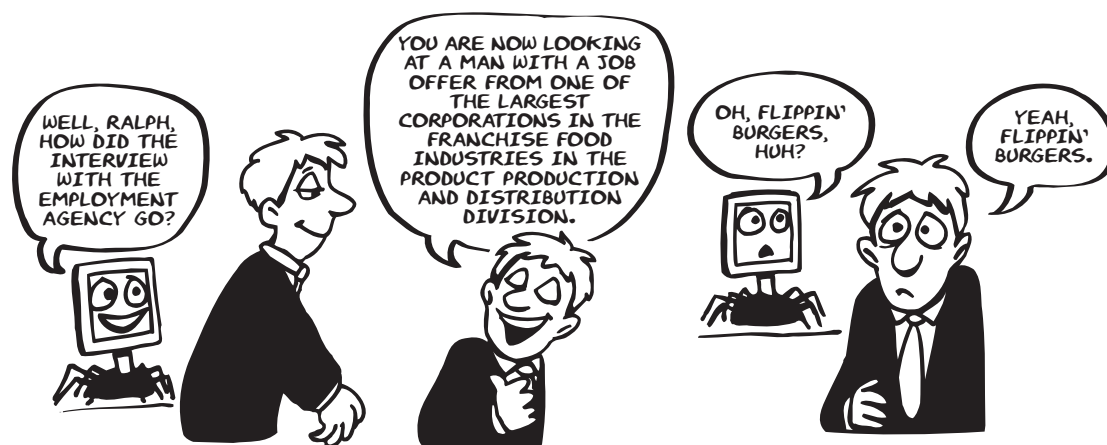
Choosing a search firm to use is just like shopping for any other service you purchase. Shopping around is a good practice. Only you can evaluate the quality of service that you are likely to receive.

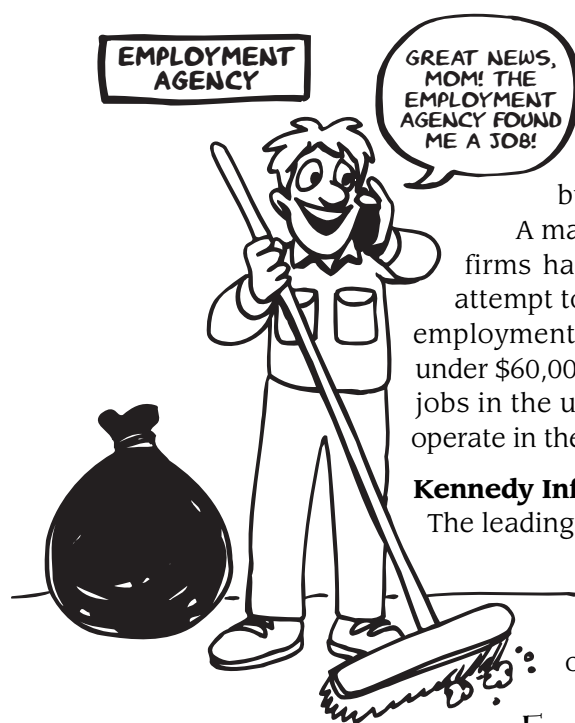
Most agencies charge employers when a hire is made. Always ask about “fee paid jobs only.” If you have to pay, plan on handing over 15 to 25 percent of your first year’s earnings to the agency. Usually you do not pay.

Employment agencies serve a brokerage function for middle management jobs that pay \$30,000 to \$80,000.

Executive Search Firms

What is the difference between an employment agency and a search firm? The original distinction was that an agency charged the applicant, and the search firm billed the employer. Many agencies today accept only fee paid jobs, however, so that distinction is slowly fading.





Search firms “recruit” the best talent. Today, many of the large search firms maintain extensive files of potential job candidates. All firms have websites to solicit quality resumes. Always remember that these services are paid by the employer. They count on repeat business. The loyalty is to the employer, not you.

A major distinction between employment agencies and search firms has been the “responsibility level” of the positions they attempt to fill as reflected by the salary levels. The majority of the employment agency business is placing people in positions paying under \$60,000. Only in rare instances do reputable search firms accept jobs in the under-\$60,000 salary level. Most executive search firms operate in the over-\$100,000 salary range.

Kennedy Information

www.kennedyinfo.com

The leading provider of information on search firms anywhere in the world. Their newsletters, directories, and conferences are value leaders or employment professionals (and professional level job seekers) for information on search firms and web career related search sites.

Fees. An executive search firm is hired on an exclusive basis by the employer to identify, screen, verify references, and arrange interviews. The firm is paid an initial fee that is retained whether or not a suitable candidate is found. The final total fee charged the employer ranges from 25 to 33 percent of the annual salary.

There is a clear bias on the part of search firms. They work for employers. The local firms encourage applicants to come in. The national search firms almost close their doors. They will find you through your network partner referrals. There is no monetary return in seeing hundreds of job applicants.

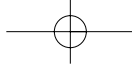
Search firms are often called “head hunters.” They go after the best-qualified talent for their clients. That means more than rifling through a file of resumes. The best candidate is probably already working for a competitor in an assignment similar to the one to be filled.

Sourcing. A search firm professional spends hours on the telephone talking to people already successfully employed.

Employment Agency Characteristics

- Charge 15 to 20 percent of annual salary
- Set up appointments for you
- Some counseling available for a fee
- Effort depends on client’s marketability
- Assist in resume preparation (fee)
- Focus on middle management jobs
- Often specialize

Figure 15.7



Two Types of Search Firms

Consider using a search firm as one of your job lead resources.

- **Retainer:** Paid by the employer on an exclusive retainer basis to locate people for a specific position
- **Contingency:** Search is not exclusive to one search firm only and agency is paid only upon successful placement

What can you do to encourage a firm to call you?

Figure 15.8

Highly successful managers rarely are in the job market. The best jobs usually find them via their network.

Search firm professionals are not looking for resumes. They spend their time talking to leaders in professions, career specialties, and/or industries. They intuitively know when people are ready for promotion or movement. Their business is to track star performers and at the proper time play matchmaker.

The search professional's job is extremely personal in nature. Headhunters spend hours on the telephone asking highly paid people if they know of candidates coming along who might be ready for truly major assignments. Consequently, these search professionals run in circles of people earning very high incomes.

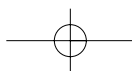
A search firm could become one of the participants in your job search. If you are moving toward the appropriate income level, or are already there, you might explore how you can get your name circulated in the right places.

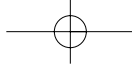
Contingency Firms. A spin-off of the search firm business has been the development of "contingency" firms. In this situation, an employer may "list" a \$50,000–\$100,000 job with several contingency search firms. The search firm receives a fee, usually 30 percent, only if and when a candidate that they have sourced and referred to the employer is hired. They do not operate on an exclusive listing basis.

Use. Sending your resume to a search firm is not normally the best technique. You have to prepare such a general resume that your goals come across as weak and vague. That is not the type of resume that you want circulating. At that salary level, it could easily come together with a more specific resume of yours from another source and thus be counterproductive.

The best way to deal with search firms is not to deal directly with them. Let others speak for you or wait until the search firm calls you. If you properly and skillfully are using your network contacts, and if you are a "star," search professionals will find you. Ask your key network partners to mention your background to respected search firms.

If the position to which you now aspire is in middle management or technical, spend some of your time working with search firms and your col-





Executive Search Firm Listings

Directory of Executive Recruiters
Consultant News
Templeton Road
Fitzwilliam, NH 03447

www.kennedyinfo.com

Figure 15.9

lege career service office. Nurture your own contacts. If you make a positive track record and are ready for top management, the search firm people will find you.

Whether you are planning for the future or just for now, include the use, or potential use, of search firms in your overall career plan. These professional participants could greatly aid you in meeting your long-term career goals by getting you interview appointments. They work almost exclusively via telephone. Be ready with a carefully prepared presentation when you are called.

State Employment Services

Traditionally, state employment offices have served primarily clerical workers, retail clerks, and blue-collar personnel. There has been an increasing interest in serving people seeking technical, professional, and managerial positions recently, however.

Most state services now have a very useful website. Check out these in your locale for quality. It varies.

The effectiveness of employment services varies greatly from location to location, so it may be worthwhile to walk in and see what type of service your local organization is providing.

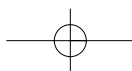
Many employers are now required by law to list all openings with government employment services. Employers holding government contracts over a certain size must comply with this regulation to ensure that adequate consideration has been given to veterans, minorities, the handicapped, and other protected classes.

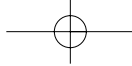
The services are free to both you and the employer. Offices are located in most cities. These offices are doing their best to shed the old stigma of being “unemployment” offices. The service is a possible, if not likely, participant in your job campaign.

Americas Job Bank’s website usually lists all jobs: www.abi.gov.

U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration www.doleta.gov

Government training centers use this site to help job applicants write resumes, cover letters, search job banks, and help themselves.





When the Headhunter Calls

Do you have a presentation ready to give?

Headhunters make no money until they find the right candidate for the employer who is paying the fee. If they call you, they received your name from a reliable source who advised the headhunter that you might be a viable candidate.

The caller will tell you about the job opening and then ask if you might be interested. Indicate that you are pleased with your progress at your present employer but that you would like to have some additional information about the job. There are a number of questions you should be prepared to ask.

- Ask for more information
- Ask about salary level
- Indicate that you are near that level now
- Inquire about location
- Employer's name will not always be revealed
- Why is there an opening?
- What is the work environment?
- When must the job be filled?

Based upon this information, decide if you want to pursue it further. If you do, ask if you can have a day to discuss it with your family. Agree to call the recruiter the next day. After buying some time, use it wisely to decide if you really want to pursue the option.

If you are only marginally interested, you may wish to discuss the call with your superiors or work colleagues. Make it clear that you did not initiate any contact and that you have no interest in the job. The fact that outsiders are interested in pursuing you cannot hurt your internal salary and advancement potential. That still does not preclude you from following up with the headhunter.

If you are interested, call the headhunter and advise that you would like to talk further. Do not permit a telephone interview. You want the opportunity to meet and impress the headhunter personally.

The headhunter will usually agree to meet you for lunch or after work at a neutral site. It is at this time that you must get the name of the employer, if you do not know it. The headhunter interview is very important so you should plan for it like any other formal interview. Headhunters work for employers, not you.

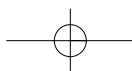
The headhunter will usually recommend that the firm interview two or three candidates who have been interviewed and screened. If you are one of those recommended, you will still negotiate the interview date with the headhunter but the interview will be at the employer's facilities by their personnel, including the person to whom you would be reporting.

Usually the headhunter is involved in the salary negotiation. You probably discussed it with the employer but the headhunter's role is not insignificant. The offer will usually come directly from the employer, but the verbal offer could come via the headhunter. A 20 percent increase is not uncommon.

After you receive the offer in writing, it is time to discuss your options with your current employer if you have not already made a firm decision. It is not uncommon to use the offer as a bargaining chip with your current employer. Assuming that you are serious about leaving, you have nothing to lose.

Whether the headhunter is with an employment agency, contingency search firm, or retained search firm, your career can be enhanced when the headhunter calls.

Are you ready for the headhunter's call?



State Web Services

Nearly every state in the United States has a government-funded employment service. The quality of services, especially those dealing with college graduates, varies. Thousands of employers have vendor relations with governments and thus are often “required” to list any job openings with their local government employment agency.

If you have a special geographical location job requirement, you should check out this resource. Although it may take a minute or two of surfing to locate these listings, it can be worth the time. The search surf should start with this URL:

www.state.XX.us/

The XX is the 2-digit postal code for your state. These URL addresses are not difficult to locate.

Many cities also have major job agencies within specific departments. These cities often have cooperative employment programs with local Chamber of Commerce organizations. The state employment agency almost always has links to these city jobs. Major cities like San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York City, Chicago, Atlanta, Dallas, Phoenix, etc. have their own sites. A search engine like www.google.com will get you to the correct URL's.

Another excellent link that you often find is to the major local newspapers who have their employment ads in a database. The larger newspapers are in consortiums that also focus upon city and regional area employment.

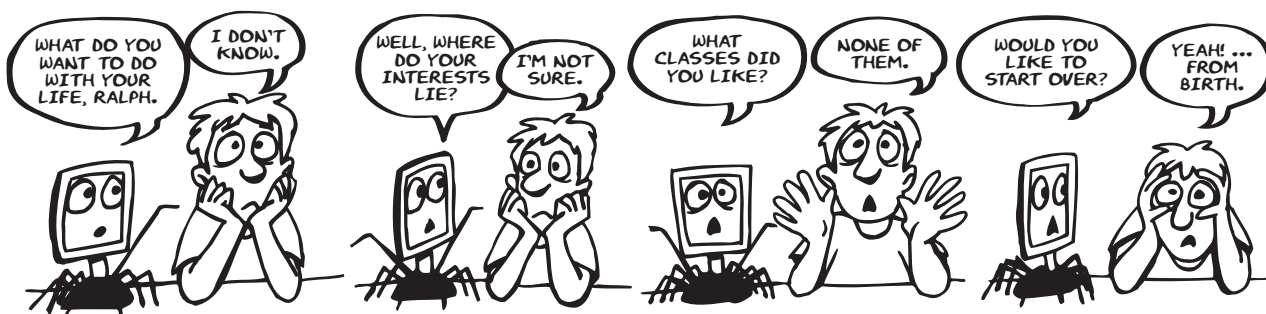
A directory of all state employment offices by state can be found at this URL: www.fedworld.gov. A little surfing will get you to these resources.

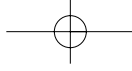
When a career assessment firm works for an organization that is downsizing, the same firm may be called an “outplacement” firm.

Career Assessment Services

Career assessment services are private career counseling programs. They work with people on an individual and group basis covering all phases of career planning.

Clients go through exercises in self-assessment and take batteries of psychological tests. Professional counselors work with clients in guiding them through various potential career fields. The goal of these firms is to assist clients in the career decision-making process. A search engine with key words like career coach, career counseling, employment, etc., will help you locate these firms. All are in the yellow pages.





It is common for employers to pay for a certain number of coaching hours as part of your severance package if you are laid off.

An extensive part of career coaching is helping you define your long-term goals in a manner that is consistent with your background and job market reality. The counselor then aids you in transforming your long-term goals into some real job possibilities that might be stepping stones to your personal career goals.

The second major phase of these services is helping you prepare a marketing plan for getting a specific job. A significant amount of help is given in resume preparation, cover letter design, interview coaching, and developing an effective network of personal contacts.

Most of the services will *assist* you in finding a job. The most reputable firms, however, make no guarantees nor imply any guarantees. They offer advice and leads, but unlike the search firms, they do not schedule interviews.

Many reputable firms consider it unethical to get involved in an employer referral process. If a counselor did become involved that way, he or she would be vulnerable to a charge of manipulating the client's interests and career plan into a direction that led straight to a given employer. They want to remain independent.

As a result, most career assessment firms stay out of the search business. They are career counselors and advisors only. Beware if they offer claims that sound like services offered by executive search firms.

The most they should offer is to provide contacts and listings of potential employers. Some may offer specific job leads. Be cautious.

If you feel you need this personal attention, career assessment firms can be the perfect thing for you. As with many other subjects, however, it is possible to learn much of what career assessment firms present out of a book or a self-programmed learning experience. Even websites can help.

Some people learn better within the structure of a classroom, seminar, or individual guidance study program. If you do not have the discipline to apply the principles yourself, the career assessment services may be ideal.

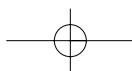
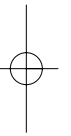
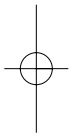
The cost of individual counseling varies from \$60 to \$150 per hour. Complete programs usually cost well over \$3,000. A one- to five-day seminar costs from \$500 to \$2,000.

The charges may be broken down by the individual services rendered. The cost is not minor. Be sure you know what you are paying for and that you are willing to pay the amount for the service provided.

The charges are legitimate and well worth the investment for many people. The majority of organizations are extremely reputable. The good firms are earning a handsome profit as they should. Check these firms out just as you would other firms that provide personal services.

Job Boards. It is very difficult to advise anyone on how much time to spend with the major site job boards. The end of this chapter lists the major job boards but there are several hundreds of others that serve very special job markets.

Outplacement firms rarely assist in arranging personal interviews. Their role is one of assistance, not placement.



Unsolicited Letter to Search Firm or Employment Agency

Dear *[specific name]*:

As a director-level marketing manager at ABC Inc., I have made considerable career progress as you can see from the attached resume. However, the time is ripe for me to seek a broader range of responsibilities in a new environment at the vice presidential level. My most significant accomplishments of interest to your clients are likely to be the following:

1. Manage bottom line P&L responsibility for our largest group of brands.
2. Prepared and implemented highly successful marketing plans that moved our market share penetration up 5 points, increased profitability 20 percent, and managed all resource allocations for a new product that now grosses over \$20 million annually.
3. Evaluated and managed three product line acquisitions including an overseas joint venture in the past five years.

With incentive compensation, I would be seeking an opportunity in the \$80,000–\$100,000 range. Should you run across a client assignment matching my credentials, please call or e-mail me.

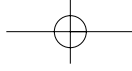
Sincerely,

Figure 15.10

Very few job applicants will tell you that they got a job from a website. But many of them will tell you that the websites played an important role in their job search and interviewing. Often a job lead will emerge from the job boards or a firm (or headhunter) that called them as a result of an uploaded resume or e-mail reply to a job board listing.

The key value in job boards is your access to information. All of them offer advice on resumes, cover letters, company profiles, interviewing tips, salary negotiations, networking articles, etc. Of course, they all list jobs that are currently open.

How much time should I spend on the job board websites is a constant question. Some surveys indicate that job hunters often spend 50 percent of their available search time with the job boards, whether the specialty type or large well-known sites. Rarely do you see more than 20 percent of successful job hunters claiming that the final job lead came directly from the web. With such a high percentage of job hunters claiming that their final job lead came from “networking” sources, one must temper the time spent on the web versus time spent on networking. Yet, some networking can be done using web resources.



Very few experts will deny that the web is growing in importance in the job search process. You should therefore spend much of your time using the boutique and big job boards in your search process. Since all research supports “networking” as your best lead source, that is where you must place most of your time available in our job search process. Nonetheless, the web is a high job lead resource generator and can help identify networking contacts.

Much of your time commitment to the web will relate to the type of position that you are seeking. If you are seeking a technical, business, or sales assignment, your job success on the web is likely to be higher than others. Nonetheless, you never want to put all of your time into one search method. As in financial investments, you need diversity. Balance your time commitments but do not overlook the use of the web. It is full of information that you need.

The URLs of the websites described below will get you started. Your college career services office will surely recommend many other job boards, many of which are superior to the big job boards due to geographical, association considerations, and other reasons. Start browsing and you will start learning quickly.

Your situation could be unique. You must start browsing and applying to see if this job search method best fits your career goals.

Career Builder**www.careerbuilder.com**

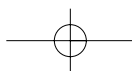
The CareerBuilder Network offers a world of opportunity to job seekers by providing access to millions of jobs throughout the Internet—all tailored to one’s individual search. With the *my careerbuilder* service, you can easily manage your entire career building experience when you receive instant e-mail updates on job leads, a job leads folder to store your favorite job prospects, and the ability to post and manage up to five resumes (including the ability to block resumes from being viewed by designated companies) and a cover letter. Tap into a “one-stop search experience” by using the *Mega Job Search* tool, which provides access to jobs on more than 75+ leading career sites or go to the *Virtual Skills Center* that includes many tools and resources to enhance and validate the skills of the career-minded professional.

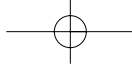
Monster**www.monster.com**

Monster.com is a career network that job seekers can use to expand their careers, providing continuous access to the most progressive companies, as well as interactive, personalized tools to make the process effective and convenient. Features include: My Monster, resume management, a personal job search agent, a careers network containing a global link to many different countries (with more countries coming), chats and message boards, privacy options, expert advice on job-seeking and career management and free newsletters. Specialized links to MonsterTRAK, which is targeted toward college students/graduates, ChiefMonster for senior executives, and Monster Talent Market designed specifically for “free agents.”

Yahoo! hotjobs**hotjobs.yahoo.com**

Sign up for a free “myHotJobs Profile” and create an on-line resume, control the privacy of your resume by blocking specific employers from view-





ing it (namely, your current one), set up automatic job search agents, track your job applications, and view your Resume statistics. You can also view jobs sorted by location, title, date of posting, and then link directly to the real job description. Use the advanced search feature to search on keyword, company, or location. Also offers a message board, an excellent career magazine, and a unique career fair.

America's Job Bank**www.ajb.dni.us**

AJB is a partnership between the U.S. Department of Labor and the state-operated public employment service. As you may expect, AJB gets its job listings from federal government openings and state public employment agencies. You can define searches by location, highly specific job function, or keyword phrases. Other links are available to a variety of public and private employment pages. America's Job Bank does have application options and contact addresses. Best of all, this service is FREE!

USA Jobs**www.usajobs.opm.gov**

The U.S. Government's official site for jobs and employment information provided by the United States Office of Personnel Management. Click on the Current Job Openings link on the opening page to find a menu of six job areas: Professional Career, Entry Level Professional, Senior Executive, Summer, Clerical and Technician, and Trades and Labor. You can look at jobs alphabetically or by series. You will find thousands of jobs at this site, including positions for archeologist, park rangers, statisticians, loan clerks, firefighters, etc. Allows you to create a resume to keep a file.

MonsterTRAK**www.monstertrax.com**

Monster.com purchased Jobtrax and student center websites a few years ago and incorporated them into a special sub-component website that focuses attention upon college students. Special efforts are made to post only college-related jobs and internships in both the public and private job sectors. It works as a partner with several hundred career service offices. Look at these student services, articles, company listings, company links, etc. and see if this data brings value to you.

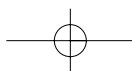
College GRAD**www.collegegrad.com**

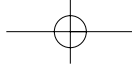
College GRAD targets college graduates exclusively. This site has links to hundreds of colleges, lists jobs, provides resume posting, etc. Excellent search articles with free access.

 **Summary**

The job search is clearly defined in our society and contains built-in checks and balances to guard against nepotism and discrimination. Once the process is understood, it is relatively easy for one to operate effectively.

The job market itself is a pool of available job openings, which may or may not be advertised widely for a variety of reasons. You and the employer are the principal actors in your job search scenario, but a strong supporting cast is made up of human resource departments, teachers, work associates, friends, relatives, and acquaintances.





A number of professional services aid in the process of bringing you and an employer together. College career services, search firms, state employment offices, websites, and career assistance services all can be used in your job search strategy.

The key to success is your ability to wisely prospect for job leads and job interviews. The supporting team aids in your prospecting and networking, but in the final analysis, your efforts pay the biggest dividends. Applying the techniques and knowledge here will improve your prospecting and job search success.

