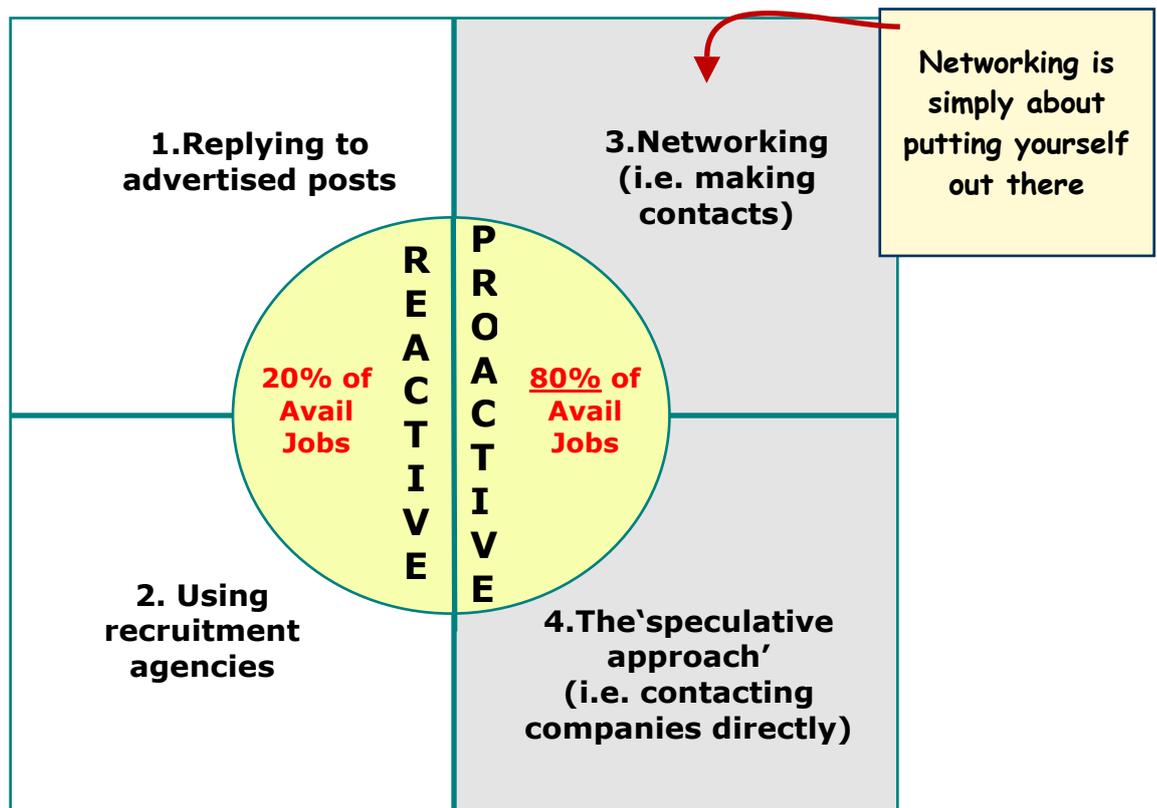


## Step 17

### Finding Jobs

#### Finding jobs:

There are two ways to job hunt, and four main ways to access the jobs market.



The first way is **Reactive** and consists of:

1. Replying to advertised posts.
2. Going to recruitment agencies.

The second way is **Proactive** and this means;

3. Networking (i.e. making contacts).
4. The 'speculative' approach (i.e. contacting companies directly).

#### Reactive Job Hunting:

Most jobseekers use the **Reactive** approach. If you use this method only then you are putting yourself at a serious disadvantage.

- 1. Advertised posts:** you should certainly reply to advertised jobs that are suited to you, but it is estimated that **80% of jobs are not advertised!** This means that most jobseekers are competing for only 20% of available jobs. Yes - do reply to advertised jobs that suit you, but *remember* – it is where you will find the stiffest competition.
- 2. Recruitment agencies:** It is okay to register with recruitment agencies and you should, but keep in mind that such agencies will not be actively promoting you.

## Proactive Job Hunting

Being **Proactive** as a job hunter means getting out there and selling yourself. When done correctly you gain access to what is known as the 'Hidden Jobs Market'. This is where most of the jobs are (80% approx), and the least competition. The prospects for securing employment by being proactive are vastly better than relying on the reactive approach alone.

- 3. Networking:** Don't be put off by the term. Networking simply means contacting and meeting people who can act as an extra set of eyes on ears on the ground. Networking is believed to be the most effective way to find work, and the more contacts you have in your 'network' the more opportunities you are likely to come across. That is, providing you have asked them to help out, and they know what you have to offer an employer.
- 4. Speculative approaches:** Approaching potential employers 'speculatively' is an extremely effective job hunting tactic. However there is a right way and a wrong way to do it.

### 1. Advertised Jobs

Here are some general tips regarding advertised jobs:

Advertised jobs can come from a variety of sources, but be especially mindful of those that are advertised on a local level. The more local the better. Always check local notice boards, local advertisers, and local employment services offices.

Monitoring advertising of posts can give you an insight into trends, what is happening in the jobs market, and what employers are looking for. When replying to an advertised job you should:

1. List the job requirements. An advertised job will normally state what you **MUST** have.
  2. List the job preferences. This is what the employer would like you to have, though it is not essential.
  3. Check the lists with what you have to offer.
  4. Emphasise what you have that matches the requirements and preferences of the employer in your application, your CV, your cover letter, and your verbal pitch.
  5. Do not refer to what you cannot offer.
  6. Research the company. You may find information that will tell you more about what the employer would like. This information could be useful to your application. If you can get information from someone who already works with the company, better again.
  7. Always follow up your application with a phone call. The purpose here is to give a potential employer an opportunity to get to know you. It also displays enthusiasm. You can ask the employer if they have received the application, and mention that you are keen to ensure that the application has all the information that the employer needs.
- It is rare that you will be asked to an interview if what you have to offer does not meet the job requirement. However the application may be justified if you have most of what they require. Remember job requirements are the **must haves**, as distinct from preferences.

## **2. Using Recruitment Agencies**

Here is some advice for when you register with a recruitment agency:

- Recruitment agencies work for employers who pay for their services. Do not expect them to actively promote you.
- Check that the agency does not charge a fee.
- Sell yourself to the agent and be professional. An agency's reputation is enhanced when it provides an excellent employee to an employer. If the agency thinks that you are likely to enhance their reputation, they are more likely to point employers in your direction.
- Make regular contact and develop a working rapport with someone working for the agency. Remind them that you are there, and ensure that your file doesn't end up lost in some corner of a dusty office.
- Be careful with your selection of an agency. Some agencies specialise in certain fields, or most of their clients (employer) may not be matched to what you have on offer. Check with them and ask what sort of employer generally uses their services.
- Register with several agencies, but not with too many as to make working with them difficult.
- Some agencies will help you with preparation of CV's and interviews, and give you valuable information on the jobs market and pay rates.
- If you find work, ensure that you are de-registered from all agencies. This is only reasonable, and you may require their services again at some point in the future.

### 3. Networking (Putting yourself out there)

Putting yourself out there (networking) is one of the best ways to find work.

Don't be put off by the term 'networking'. It's really just business jargon that only means making contacts and letting them know what you have to offer and what you are looking for.

Here is how you do it:

#### List of contacts:

- Create a list of contacts. Anyone you already know is a contact, be they friends, relatives, neighbours, former work colleagues, employers, old school friends, your local hairdresser, you name it. Although they may not be able to get you a job, they may provide a valuable lead. Leads that just might point you at a job. Keep adding to your list when you remember someone you hadn't thought of before or when you meet someone new.
- When you do meet someone new, get their name, ask them for their contact details and give them yours.
- One by one begin to make contact with the people on your list. This takes courage, but it is a very worthwhile exercise. It doesn't need to be done all at once, but it is best to decide how many people you are going to make contact with over predetermined time periods. Tell them why you are making contact and ask them if they know anyone who may have something to offer. If they don't, thank them sincerely and ask them to keep an ear to the ground and let you know if anything arises. While some of you may feel that this is a little embarrassing, you would be amazed at the resultant leads that can be found. Aside from the results, the fact is that most people will feel honoured that you hold them in enough regard as to ask for their help.
- If your contact has a potential lead or someone who may be able to help, ask them if they will contact the individual on your behalf in order that you may speak to them.
- Have your verbal pitch (elevator speech) prepared (go to [verbal pitch](#) for more information), in the event that one of your contacts puts you in touch with someone who may be well placed to help you.
- When you meet people socially, ask them about their own career and determine whether or not there is a link to your own ambitions. Whether there is or not, add them to your contact list and make sure that you pitch yourself to them.

#### Networking tips:

- **Be prepared:** Be ready at all times to pitch yourself. This includes always keeping a CV handy.
- **Follow up:** Follow up on leads, even where they may seem weak.
- **Ask for advice:** Networking does not mean asking for a job. Ask for advice on what the employer wants.
- **Make requests:** Tell your contact exactly what you wish from them and how they can help you get it, but ensure that your requests are within their power and are not an imposition.
- **A good word:** If you have contacted someone who could have an influence on a hiring decision, ask them to put in a good word for you.

## 4. The Speculative Approach

This involves approaching companies that do not have a job advertised.

Many jobseekers do make speculative applications, but their approach usually consists of sending their CV and that's it. This rarely achieves results.

Here is some advice on approaching employers speculatively:

- Be prepared for rejection, Speculative approaches are rarely effective over the short term. Do not lose heart however. Persistence is the key, and your first contact with an employer should not be your last.
- Pick who you'd like to work with and target them. Identify employers who are likely to need what you have to offer. Make a list.
- Research the businesses you have on your list. Attempt to identify not only what they do, but also their values, their work ethics, and their people.
- Check your list of network contacts and attempt to find someone within the company who may be able to advise you, or may have some influence within the organisation.
- Attempt to organise a meeting with someone of influence within the company. This will not always be possible, but if it can be done then it is worth the effort. This meeting (or phone call) is not to ask for a job, but to ask for advice on what the organisation looks for in an employee.
- Keep a log of your activities. You should avoid mistakenly contacting the same businesses or sending them the same CV in too short a timeframe.
- Follow up on your contacts. If you have sent a CV and cover letter, make a phone call to verify that they have been received. Ask if there is anything that you can add to what you have provided. If you have a contact within the organisation, keep in touch with them. Show that you are interested and enthusiastic about the business, without becoming an annoyance.
- If your research or your contacts indicate that you are lacking some skill, qualification, or other quality, then go about acquiring it if possible. When you have acquired it, remake your pitch and refer to the fact that you have gained the additional attribute.