

The Seven Ways to Find a Job Rated, Part 1

Mary-Frances Fox
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This article is the first of two parts. In part 1, you will be introduced to seven job search methods rated by their effectiveness. You will learn about the following three methods in greater detail: word-of-mouth, created positions, and web job boards and ads.

Here they are - the seven ways you can uncover the right job, along with their pros and cons, and the most powerful strategies available to apply each method. I divide the possible routes to your next job into "Informal" and "Formal" approaches. Here are the percentages of employments made by each method, in other words, their reliability:

Informal Sources/Methods: (70% total effectiveness rate)

1. Word-of-mouth (40%)
2. Created positions (30%)

Formal Sources/Methods: (30% total effectiveness rate)

3. Web job boards & the ads (5-10%)
4. Recruiters (5-15%)
5. Employment agencies (5%)
6. Resume blasting (5%)
7. Job listings (5%)

Check this out in the next few weeks. Ask people how they got their most recent job. You'll be amazed to find how well these percentages hold true. My point is you can manage to these realities. You can make it so having informal access to your market gets you hired, in a different career or a job move.

Just as a sports team uses different plays *for* different situations, a successful career move or job hunt requires a mix of strategies. Most people cluster down around the low-end strategies that hardly ever succeed. That is why it appears as though there are no jobs out there! Nothing could be farther from the truth, if you know how to harness the seven ways...

1. Word of Mouth (40%)

PROS AND CONS

Why is word of mouth the biggest slice of the job pie?

First, the good jobs with the best companies all have waiting lists, so managers seldom need to cast about for candidates on the Internet. Go-getters keep a jealous eye on those positions and make themselves and their accomplishments known to the hiring decision makers while the job is still filled. Thus, when an opening is about to happen, several candidates surface quickly.

Second, word of mouth is the method preferred by hiring managers because it screens out lesser qualified and unmotivated candidates. They really do ask around: "Who do you know who's good?"

YOUR STRATEGY: FOCUS. Know the job titles, industries, and levels of responsibility, reporting structure, and other elements that make up your job targets. Know what you're qualified for. Since you never get a second chance to make a first impression, you must be able to speak the language of the interviewer and relate directly how you can serve his/her interest.

YOUR SECOND STRATEGY is to make a terrific impression on anyone who is likely to know people connected to your target hiring decision-makers. For instance, my clients systematically meet directly with these industry players through a learned, professional relationship building process.

Educate yourself on the art and science of crafting a good network!

When you do hear of hiring activity, your strategy is to bone up on the industry and the personality of the hiring influence. Take the initiative. Write and ask for a job interview. If it is a hot lead, email, send a letter and call on the same day; one method will get you through.

And then there's the surest road to success: Created positions.

2. Create a Position (30%)

PROS AND CONS

This is the most sophisticated strategy of any, and fully 30% of all hires out there! Very cool.

Many times you can create a role right in your present company. Often the very reasons for your dissatisfaction on your present job can be the inspiration for a new job in your company precisely to fix those problems. What opportunities do you see around you? Have you set out to diplomatically propose yourself as a loyal solution?

The most familiar type of created position occurs when a company expands its operations and hires new sales or administrative people to accommodate the growth. However, even downsizing can yield new positions by bringing in-house some functions that used to be big enough to outsource.

Mostly, created positions occur when a focused, energetic go-getter meets an executive who values drive and talent, and the chemistry is right. Executives have definitely been known to hire first and make up job descriptions later!

YOUR STRATEGY: Identify what's wanted and needed inside your present company or by a company whose work relates to your special advantages. Get directly to the executive who has the vision to see those needs. Make a job proposal to them on how you could make or save them money, or one of the four other factors I teach that make any organization hire.

3. Web Job Boards & the Ads (5-10%)

PROS AND CONS

Employers always post or advertise reluctantly. They know that there are only a few go-getters among the hundreds of respondents.

They advertise formally (that is, nearly spoil it for themselves and the best-suited talent out there) when:

- a) they have high turnover positions and need a pipeline full of candidates - this is a "job mill";
- b) they need someone faster than word-of-mouth might provide;
- c) they already know who's really slotted for the job but it's political;
- d) they are looking for more than one good person and are willing to comb through weeks of responses to find them - this ad is the rare "gem."

YOUR STRATEGY (for Web Boards and the Ads) is to first decide: Are you keen about this opening?

If not, just send a standard cover letter and resume package (they seldom work out); then wait or follow up as you wish. If you are keen though, send a letter specifically mentioning and proving that you meet the job specifications in the ad and request an interview. If the ad names the employer, follow up with a phone message saying why you applied. In the interview, find out about turnover to see if this is a "job mill" or a "gem."

Mary-Frances Fox is president of Work Creatively Career Advisors Inc. She can be reached at (416) 922-4476, (888) 315-0003 or mffox@workcreatively.ca.