

## Job ads worth the work

*The Toronto Star*

Answering ads but getting no interviews?

Workers get better qualified each year they work.

By the time you've been working a few years, only some of the advertised jobs will be right for you personally. Many companies choose to advertise their entry-level and high turnover positions, and straight-commission sales. Whether on the web or in the newspaper, the majority of ads simply aren't the best fit for your experience.

- Spend no more than 5 per cent of your valuable job searching time on want ads.
- Look at the ads briefly and pick out 10 where you might be a real benefit to the company.

When attractive ads that suit your experience do appear, did you know you can ruin your chances by sending a cover letter and resume? Rather than say "I'm great; hire me!", do some investigating on what to tell them.

Stand up, smile and call the company. Ask for the sales department, or the department the job is in, if you know it. Or strike up a chat with the person who answers. Tell them that you're doing research on companies like theirs.

Then ask a few quick questions such as:

- How would they describe what the company does? (in one or two sentences)
- What are the challenges this industry faces?
- What do customers like about the company?
- What is the name of the person in charge of (the area that job is in)?

Now ask yourself if you want an interview.

How could your abilities help this company?

Write your letter and send it to Human Resources and also to job's department head.

Cover enough ground in the letter so that they don't need a resume, and be sure to politely and enthusiastically recommend they interview you. Agree to give them a resume when they phone you.

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