

JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES

Looking for work can be very time consuming and difficult. Job search strategies are constantly evolving with our new economy which makes it essential that you keep up with the changes and adapt your techniques to ensure that you don't get left behind! You must:

1. DEFINE YOUR GOALS – What do you want to do and why?

If you don't know what work you REALLY want to do how do you know where to look for it? A self-assessment will assist you in narrowing down your job search to 2-3 key industries. Ask yourself a few critical questions:

- What unique skills and attributes do you offer?
- What do you enjoy doing?
- What skills do you want to use at work?
- What is essential for you to enjoy work? Consider the opportunity for advancement, your need for flexibility and creative freedom, what work-life balance you want, and rewards (financial and other).
- What goals are realistic for you considering your education, skills and experience?

2. RESEARCH YOUR OPTIONS – Locating the hidden job market

Once you have a sense of what work you want to do, research is necessary to determine where the employment opportunities are. Asking key questions can narrow down your work search tremendously.

- What type of work fits with your answers from the above questions?
- Which businesses and organizations offer this type of work?
- What are these employers looking for in an employee?
- Who are the key people you need to network with?

Conduct your research by using the internet, through informational meetings with employees and supervisors of the company, and by reading a variety of newspapers, business reports and trade magazines. Look for specific labour market information (which companies are moving to town, which ones are expanding and which ones are merging). Make it your goal to know what is happening in your community! From this information set employment related goals and develop a 'job leads list.'

3. CONTACT OPPORTUNITIES – Tapping into the hidden job market

When conducting your research on employment options you will begin to unravel the 'hidden job market.' As over 85% of jobs are never advertised, this leaves a lot of employment opportunities to be discovered.

Employment experts agree, networking is a significantly better way to secure work than sending resumes to advertised job postings! Networking can be done a variety of ways, it can include having a cup of coffee with a friend, attending industry trade shows, joining industry associations, and asking for informational interviews with key decision makers in your chosen field. When networking consider talking to:

- Family, friends, neighbours
- Teachers, coaches, mentors
- Past employers, co-workers and peers
- Members of clubs, religious groups and other organizations you belong