

10 Ways to Find a Job

There's more than one way to find a job. Planning your job search and using a variety of methods will increase your chances of success.

Make your job search effective by identifying how, where and when you can find the jobs that really interest you. Different industries recruit in different ways, so focus on the methods and deadlines common in the sectors you are applying to. Find this by researching online and by talking to people working in the industry.

Combining different job search methods to find the right role for you will increase your chances of success. Here's a variety of job-hunting tactics to try out.

1. Job boards and online vacancy sources

General graduate recruitment sites such as the ones listed below, provide job listings in various sectors and careers advice.

- www.prospects.ac.uk
- www.targetjobs.co.uk
- www.milkround.com

Use the job profiles on the Prospects website to find specialist vacancy sites, for example, the software engineer job profile contains links to a number of relevant job boards. Also, browse job adverts to discover new roles or potential companies you could apply to. Bookmark job sites you like, sign up for email alerts, and check them regularly for updates. If you see an interesting advert but the role is not quite right for you, check the company's own jobs page regularly or contact them speculatively.

Don't miss opportunities by thinking too narrowly about job titles as organisations often describe the same type of role differently. Look beyond the job title and explore the person specification and job description to see what the job actually involves.

2. Employer websites

There may be specific companies that you are interested in working for. But bear in mind some employers will not advertise their vacancies via job boards. So, it is important you check their websites regularly for suitable vacancies.

Find out more about the organisation by following them on social media and follow up with a speculative application.

3. Making the most of your contacts

Around a third of university leavers secure graduate employment in an organisation they've previously worked for through internships, volunteering or part time work. Make the most of your contacts by asking current or past employers for advice on how and where they recruit, as well as what they look for.

Use this information to focus your job search and think about which experiences will be most useful to you and why.

Your contacts may also be able to provide additional practical work experience. For example, if you have had a part time retail job, you could investigate whether there are work-shadowing opportunities in their head office.

4. Events, talks and workshops

Attending events is a great way to increase your contacts and gain insight that will help your job search. Gather valuable information and build your commercial awareness by asking about what is happening in their organisation and industry, plus find out where and how they recruit.

You can make a good impression and stand out from the crowd by:

- Researching who is attending
- Preparing questions beforehand, and making sure the answers aren't obvious on their website
- Bringing an updated CV

Check your careers website and relevant professional bodies for details of talks and fairs.

5. Social media

A professional online presence is always useful. Effectively utilising online networking sites such as LinkedIn and Twitter will allow you to;

- Follow companies you are interested in
- Expand your range of contacts
- Follow industry developments and trends
- Hear about events where you can network in person
- Join relevant industry, alumni, and interest groups

6. Industry news

Develop your commercial awareness by reading articles in sector specific blogs or magazines, such as New Scientist or The Economist.

Search career sites for your industry (e.g. marketing or pharmaceuticals) to find additional news sources. Use this knowledge to demonstrate your motivation and enthusiasm for both the company and industry on your application and at interview.

7. Unadvertised jobs and speculative applications

An estimated 70% of jobs are never advertised. Once you have found potential employers you would like to work for, send them your CV and a speculative covering letter explaining your interest and how your skills and experience would fit that particular organisation.

8. Employment and recruitment agencies

Before using an agency, look at the jobs on their website to see if they are applicable to you. Be open to both temporary and longer-term jobs, as temping can be an excellent way to build your experience, gain contacts, and potentially secure a permanent position within the company.

Find agencies at www.agencycentral.co.uk.

9. Professional bodies and associations

These organisations often publish a list of their members online which you can use to identify potential employers. Many also provide industry news, careers advice, information on training, events, and job listings.

10. Business directories

Online business directories provide lists and details of organisations you can search by sector. This is a particularly useful way to find small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). Search directories to find potential employers you can research further and apply to speculatively if they are not currently advertising any roles.

Using specific criteria in a search engine such as “marketing assistant jobs London” or “environmental start-ups London” can uncover particularly useful results.

See:

- www.uksmallbusinessdirectory.co.uk
- www.londondirectory.co.uk
- www.yell.com

Think

Think broadly

Don't limit your search by only looking at certain industries or employers. For example, accountants don't just work for finance companies, but organisations ranging from engineering firms to fashion houses. It is likely there are a huge number of roles and companies with exciting opportunities that you have never even heard of before.

Think flexibly

Few graduates walk straight into their dream job. Be open to other roles and types of organisation where you can build the skills you need.

For example, you may want to work in a finance role, but data entry or admin roles in a finance department could be an excellent springboard.

Think methodically

Looking for work is time consuming. Set yourself realistic goals (e.g. research 10 employer websites in one afternoon) will help your efficiency and keep you motivated. Make a note of roles you're interested in and their deadlines. Also, keep track of all the roles you apply for and keep copies of every application that you send.

Think positively

It can be frustrating and disheartening if you don't hear back from an employer you've applied to or are not shortlisted for a role you really wanted. This happens to everyone at some point. It's important not to give up but to use the experience to improve your future applications. Always ask for feedback and find ways of learning from it.

Checklist

- Keep note of the jobs you've applied to.
- Keep copies of your applications to help you prepare for interview.
- Get friends or family to proofread your application. Employer feedback reveals many are immediately rejected due to grammar mistakes and typos.
- Keep track of deadlines.

If you find that you are not getting shortlisted it might be time to take a step back. Are you applying for the right type of roles appropriate to your level of skills and experience? Is your CV or application effective?

Make an appointment with your careers service to discuss your options and get feedback on your CVs and applications.

This resource is available in alternative formats.

Please contact your careers service or email careersgroup@careers.lon.ac.uk