

STEP 4 : GUIDE TO RESEARCHING THE JOB MARKET AND NETWORKING

Researching the job market well is vital to finding the best opportunities to match your own preferences, skills and aspirations. It is much more than simply looking for what jobs are being advertised. Thorough research will incorporate a range of simple activities to ensure you fully appreciate the opportunities which are available and relevant to you.

Understanding the Job Market

There are two different areas that deal with recruitment of new staff members

1. **The visible market:** 50% of jobs are in this market, and includes those you can find through:
 - Job vacancy websites and CV databases on the internet – private and public (Job Search)
 - Vacancy listings on Company websites
 - Classified sections of newspapers
 - Classified sections of professional and trade journals
 - Public employment agencies (Job Centre Plus)
 - Private employment agencies
 - Public sector employment offices (local/county)
 - Professional association placements i.e. contract/interim
 - Careers fairs
 - Job hotlines
 - Local Bulletin boards
2. **The hidden market:** 50% of jobs are in this market, and includes positions that are filled by, or created for, candidates who come to an employer's attention through employee recommendations, referrals from trusted associates, recruiters, or direct contact with the candidate. Some of the ways of accessing the hidden market is through social media and chatting with friends and family – letting them know that you are available.

Researching the Job Market

Using Google and other search engines

Using Internet search engines gives you access to a wealth of information as a starting point for your job market research. You can use these firstly to research key local employers and to find the main job websites including any which are specific to your local area. Once you have found this information this will give you the basis for a range of activities to help your job search:

- Registering with relevant job websites and setting up alerts against the main criteria which fit what you are looking for. You can set diary reminders to check these sites regularly.

- Researching company websites of those which interest you as an organisation you may like to work for to find out more about them and what information is available in the career sections. Look at their vacancy sections regularly and see what information there is about careers available with them and what entry requirement there may be for these opportunities.
- Sending speculative letters with CVs to organisations which you would like to work for. You may find it useful to look at the [Guide to Preparing an Effective CV](#) and the [Guide to Preparing an Effective Covering Letter](#).

Using the local news

The local news can also be a useful source of information which may lead to you gaining ideas for where you may be able to apply for jobs. Keep an eye open for local press articles about local employers with new initiatives or potential expansion plans.

Networking

Networking is probably the most effective way to access the hidden job market. The hardest part of networking is usually making that first telephone call or setting up the first meeting. This may put you outside of your comfort zone but once you have made a start the benefits can be really worth while making that effort.

Benefits of Networking

The benefits of effective networking are many. Some of these are:

- It is the most cost effective marketing tool available
- Networking referrals will typically generate **80% more results** than a cold call
- **70 to 80% of all jobs** are found through networking
- Every person you meet has **200 – 250 people with whom they are connected** who can potentially assist you
- Anyone that you might want to meet or contact in the world, is only **5 to 6 people contacts** away from you

Preparing for Networking

The key to networking successfully is preparation and organisation:

- Build a list of all the people you think can help you in your career move
- Put their names, addresses and phone numbers and email addresses into a record
- Include sufficient space on your record for your comments on what was discussed
- Start thinking about your script for phone calls, meetings and emails
- Prepare your 'elevator speech'
- Try to keep a simple but effective recording system

Preparing an elevator speech

A really useful tool for you and key to your preparation for networking, is to prepare an "Elevator speech". If you were to meet a potentially important contact for the first time in an elevator at a conference and he/she asks you: "What do you do?", you have no more than 20 seconds - perhaps just 10-15 seconds - between floors to explain and to make such an impressive impact that the person asks for your contact details.

Here are the main points for creating your elevator speech:

1. your name	"My name is..." Look the other person in the eye. Smile. Shoulders back. Speak with confidence. Sincerity and passion are crucial in making a strong early impression.
2. your business name	"I work for..." or "My business is ..." Loud clear proud again. Do not ask "Have you heard of us..?" or wait for recognition.
3. based and covering where	"I am based..." and "I cover..." Adapt the town, city, geography for the situation. There is little value in mentioning a tiny village if you are at a global gathering, or your global coverage if you are at a local town gathering. Make this relevant to the situation.
4. your personal specialism and/or offering, and your aims	Be different and special and better in some way from your competitors. Be meaningful for the event or situation or group, and as far as you can guess, be meaningful for the contact. Express what you offer in terms of positive outcomes for those you help or supply, rather than focusing on technical details from your own viewpoint. Load your statements here with special benefits or qualities. Be positive, proud and ambitious in your thinking and expression of what you do. Include in this statement what your aims are, to show you have ambition and that you know what you are seeking from network contacts.

You might also find it helpful to look at the [Guide to Using Social Media to Build Your Network](#) as this has more information on developing your online presence, and making the most of social media when job-hunting.

Relevant websites

- <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/get-a-job/> - Go to 'How to find advertised vacancies' and 'Networking: using it to find a job' for advice
- <https://www.gov.uk/jobsearch> - job searching (previously the Job Centre)
- <http://www.jobsite.co.uk/> - job searching and careers advice
- <http://www.reed.co.uk/> - job searching and careers advice
- <http://www.monster.co.uk/> - job searching and careers advice
- <https://www.cv-library.co.uk/> - job searching and careers advice

There are plenty more websites than we can put on here. For advice on how to use Google for an efficient job search, see our related document [Top 10 Tips on using Google for Job-Searching](#).

Related documents

- [Guide to Preparing an Effective CV](#)

- [Guide to Preparing an Effective Covering Letter](#)
- [Top 10 Tips on using Google for Job-Searching](#)
- [Guide to using Social Media to Build Your Network](#)