



## Tapping the hidden job market

By Brigid Delaney  
Sydney Morning Herald

About 75 per cent of jobs are never advertised, but the hidden world of job opportunities can be accessed by word of mouth, cold calling or sending in an unsolicited job application.

With jobs that are not advertised, being in the right place at the right time is often crucial.

### Cold calling

It may be a company you've read about and thought, "I'd like to work there", or it may be a company with values closely aligned to your own. However, you never see them advertising vacancies.

It's time to pick up the phone and scout for a job. Some of us have phone phobia at the best of times, so this approach takes guts. Take a deep breath and go for it.

### *Do your homework*

Find out the name of the person you should call. Usually that person works in the human resources department. A search of the company's website should point you in the right direction, otherwise you can call the company's switchboard.

Research the company before you make the call. Is it large or small? Does it have branch offices? What are its strongest products; in what areas is it weak?

Practise before you speak. When you get through to HR, make sure you know what you want to say. What sort of job are you after? In what division? What experience have you had? Most importantly - what can you offer the company?

Make a note of your answers and have these in front of you when you make the call. You may only get a minute or two, so make a good impression.

### *Get past the gatekeepers*

Personal assistants or secretaries can help or hinder you depending on how you handle them. Be polite to the PA (but don't suck up). Often, though, PAs are trained to screen calls like yours. Speaking to them confidently, as if you have the right to talk to their boss, can help.

For example: "Hello, this is Rebecca Jones. Rupert from marketing suggested I speak to John about a recruitment matter."

### *What to say next*

OK, your call has been put through. Speak clearly and confidently. Your pitch may go something like this. "Hi, John, my name is Rebecca Jones. I am ringing about positions in the marketing department - is this a good time to speak to you?"

If it isn't, suggest another time; "OK, how about if I ring back at 11.30am - will you be free then?"

Acting confidently and nailing them down on a time to talk is important. Ask for their direct extension and ring back at the appointed time.

### *The pitch*

Keep it short, sharp and packed with the right information. That information should include your name, where you are calling from, why you are calling and what you want from them (that is, a job, a meeting to discuss vacancies.)

For example: "Hi, John. My name is Rebecca. I am currently a marketing assistant for Zen Corp. I have noticed you have strong growth in your billboard sector and was wondering if, on the back of this growth, you are expanding your billboard marketing team. I would love to have the opportunity to meet you and discuss any possible vacancies that may suit my marketing experience."

If the answer is no, ask if you can send your CV or email your contact details, in case something comes up in the future.

If the answer is yes, then lock down a time that week and treat the meeting like a job interview. Bring your CV and, if relevant, examples of your work.

Keep a record of all the calls you have made and their responses. Make a note in your diary if they say, "There's nothing now, but call us back in six months."

### *Networking*

This is a more targeted method of job hunting. It is popular with companies that rely on employees to bring in new talent. It is also cheaper to recruit this way than by placing jobs ads or searching through a recruitment firm.

Ask friends and contacts if there are any vacancies at their company or at friends' companies. If so, you may find your name being submitted at a higher level than if you were applying for a job advertised in the paper.

*Source: This is an edited extract from Changing Careers, edited by Brigid Delaney, part of the My Career book series available in Dymocks.*

*Published: 21 January 2006*

**Contact NORTEC - FREECALL 1800 667 832 visit - [www.nortec ltd.com.au](http://www.nortec ltd.com.au)**

**Please note - NORTEC provide this information for reference only, sourced from relevant websites and publications**