

## Two Ways to Cut Your Job Search Time in Half

The average job seeker spends about 15 hours a week looking for a job and gets fewer than two interviews. For that reason, many people are unemployed longer than they need to be. The more interviews a person gets, the more likely he or she is to get a job offer. So, to get more interviews sooner:

- **Go after interviews BEFORE the job is open.** Most jobs are filled by people the employer knows *before* the job is formally open. In fact, only 25 percent of all job openings are ever advertised. So instead of saying, “Do you have any jobs open?” say, “I realize you may not have any jobs open now, but I would still like to talk to you about the possibility of future openings.” Don’t wait until a job opens before contacting an employer!
- **Redefine what counts as an interview.** Most people think of interviews as being limited to situations where an employer has a job opening. But if you redefine what counts as an interview, you can get more of them, resulting in more contacts and more employers who will consider you when a job does become available. Think of an interview as any face-to-face contact with someone who has the authority to hire or supervise a person with your skills—even if there is no job opening at the time.

## The Two Most Effective Job Search Methods

Employers fill most jobs with people they meet before a job is formally open. The trick is to meet people who can hire you by networking with people you know and contacting employers directly.

### Job Search Method #1: Develop Your Network

Sixty percent of all job leads will come from people you already know. So make separate lists of friends, relatives, and other groups of people with whom you share something in common—for example, people you went to school with,

neighbors, or people in clubs or associations you belong to. Then contact all the people on your list.

Because every person you contact can introduce you to other people who might know of a job opening, be sure to ask these three questions of all your contacts:

1. "Do you know of anyone who might have a job opening in my field?" If no, then ask...
2. "Do you know of anyone who might know of someone who would?" If still no, then ask...
3. "Do you know someone who knows lots of people?"

Asking all three questions will almost always get the name of someone else to contact, thus building your network. Follow up with these leads.

### **Job Search Method #2: Contact Employers Directly**

Making direct contact with employers to inquire about possible openings or set up interviews is an effective job search technique. Follow these steps for making the most of those contacts:

- Use the index in the yellow pages of your phone book to identify types of organizations that hire people with your skills. Look up specific phone numbers and call these organizations. Ask for the person who is most likely to supervise a person with your skills.
- Present the basic content of your JIST Card (see the following page) to the prospective employer.
- Ask for an interview. If no job is open now, ask when you can come in to talk about future openings. If no openings are anticipated, ask when you can come in to simply learn more about the job. Be persistent.
- Send a thank-you note, even if you don't get an interview.
- If you have Internet access, you can use e-mails to contact employers and to follow up.