

STEP 4 SEARCHING



Find Opportunities

Now that you have Altitude from your target marketing preparations, here is a key verse to remember as you search for opportunities:

The mind of man plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps. Proverbs 16:9

Use both of your eyes for searching – one eye for looking as planned and the other eye for seeing as God directs. Sometimes finding the right opportunity comes from seeing something you are not seeking.

START YOUR LIST OF TARGET OPPORTUNITY CONTACTS

Make a list everyone you know: family, friends, neighbors, work associates, past acquaintances, former schoolmates, etc. Search professional associations, publications and research on the Internet to identify potential employers and customers that match your targets for marketing. Informational interviewing is a great way to find more organizations, qualify prospects and list contacts.

Use the Networking Log on the next page or a contact management program in your computer to start and manage your list. It is important to track who referred who in what organizations so you can contact and follow-up effectively.

Set a goal of getting at least 2 referrals for every call you make, so you build your list of contacts. The best strategy to find opportunities combines 3 efforts...

ALL THE TIME PRAYING
+
ON-THE-GROUND NETWORKING
+
ONLINE SEARCHING

ALL-THE-TIME PRAYING

Imagine you are dialing 1-800-Dear-God...calling by prayer the one Person Who knows everyone everywhere all the time. Ask Him every day before every meeting, phone call and email.

He knows the plans He has for you. He knows where all the job openings are. He knows everyone who is hiring. Consider this verse...

*“Ask, and it shall be given to you;
seek, and you shall find; knock it shall be opened to you.”* Matthew 7:7

This might be a good time to spend just 3 minutes scanning again pages 5-7 in this Workbook about hearing and following God’s calling. Make at least 1 new contact every day – even better make 10 new contacts a day. No matter the outcome of the contacts, remember to...

*Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances,
for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.* 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

ON-THE-GROUND NETWORKING

Most employers first try to recruit people through their personal contacts before they advertise a position or list it on the Internet. Of all the jobs that get filled, how many are part of this “hidden job market?”

85%

Another startling statistic came from a private corporate study that demonstrated that applicants who had been personally referred for a job were 42 times more likely to be selected than those without personal referrals. Let’s say that again. According to this study, your odds of being selected for a job are 42 times greater if you are personally referred.

That’s a 4,200% better chance!

Why is this true?

- First, you are not an “unknown.” The employer/customer knows someone who knows you.
- Second, you are considered “good” by association with the person whom the employer/customer knows. All the positive traits associated with the referring person are associated with you.
- Thirdly, the likelihood of a match between personal values and corporate culture is higher.

Amazing isn’t it? Most of the available job opportunities are not listed anywhere. It is even truer for contract work and finding customers for your business. You can only find them through personal referrals. That is why we recommend you spend 50% to 85% of your search time on networking for personal referrals and making personal contacts.

So how do you network to get personal referrals?

3 Ways to Connect

Use a combination of email, telephone and in-person meetings to connect. Each has their pluses and minuses:

1. **Email** is very efficient, but not very personal. You reach out to a lot of people quickly, but many emails get blocked or deleted without being read. Email is best for quick introductions and follow-ups, especially if the recipient is expecting your email.
2. **In-person** is of course very personal and can be very effective, but it is not very efficient. Save personal visit for high-potential contacts, unless you can meet many people in one place at one time, such as in a career fair, networking event, career group or association meeting.
3. **Telephone** can be both very efficient and effective. You can have as many as 5 personal and productive conversations per hour, and follow-up with a brief email.

Most of the time you should start with either email followed by a phone call or a phone call followed by an email. Your goal is to qualify the person you called as either a potential employer, customer or referral source. Good phone skills are important to engage and make a positive impression. Save in-person visits for people with the highest potential for helping.

Making Calls for Contacts

Calling people about your search can be challenging. It seems even harder when you don’t know the people you are calling. Here are some ways to become more effective:

- Practice first with people you know best.
- Use the names of personal referrals who gave you permission to use their names.
- Even better, ask your referrals if they will introduce you before you make contact.
- Use the phone most. Be in a quiet place with few distractions when you make your phone calls.
- Use a landline to call out. Leave your cell phone number for people to call you back.
- Keep your 30-second “Elevator Pitch” script next to the phone (see page 41).
- Be sure to take a stretch-break every 30 to 60 minutes.

Introduce Yourself

Be very attentive to what is going on with the person you are talking to. If he/she is interested, helpful, and positive, keep the conversation going. If he/she is “short” with you and making concluding types of statements, wrap up your conversation. Most calls are 2-10 minutes unless your contact continues to be actively engaged.

Here is how a conversation might go.

“Good morning (afternoon). My name is (give first and last name). I was referred by (name of referral). Is (name of referred person) available?”

Reintroduce yourself if needed. *“Good morning (afternoon). My name is (repeat your name). (Name of referral) suggested that I call you.”*

Clear the time. *“Do you have a couple of minutes to talk, or would another time be more convenient?”* Do not press to get the time. If later is better for the person you are calling, then ask to book a short phone appointment later. *“When might be a good time for you?”* Always hold conversations with open hands.

Give the reason for your call. *“I am at a crossroads in my career and wanted to ask for your help.”*

Ask for the information you want (contacts within a specific company, suggestions on companies that fit certain criteria, advice on how to approach a certain situation, etc.). If you want contacts, you might say, *“I am networking for referrals to (name of company or people in specific kinds of jobs).”* You might also say, *“I am looking for (give 3 parts of your focus—the job, the industry or company, the location). Do you know anyone in (name of company or type of position)?”*

Watch your watch! As you see the 10-minute mark coming and going, begin to wrap it up. You might say, *“I want to be thoughtful of your time. May I send you a copy of my resume in case you think of someone or something else later?”* (If yes, get the person’s email, fax number or mailing address—in that order of preference.)

Say thank you. *“Thank you for your time and help. It has been a pleasure talking with you.”*

Wrap it up. *“If I have an additional question, may I call you back? Thank you again. Have a great day. Good-bye.”*

- Make notes on the conversation as soon as you get off the phone.
- If you are to send something to the person, send it immediately.
- Call or email the referring person with a thank you for the referral.
- Continue to improve your scripts as needed.

Four More Ways to Network for Personal Referrals**1. Job Support and Networking Groups**

Many churches and community service groups have weekly or monthly meetings that offer opportunities to meet others who can help you with contacts, counsel and encouragement. You will find listings of group meetings in your local daily and business newspaper websites, as well as on www.CrossroadsCareer.org/locations. Be sure to take plenty of your business cards and copies of your resume, as well as your networking list and a notepad.

2. State Departments of Labor

Many state Departments of Labor have career centers located in key towns and cities throughout the state. These centers may offer career transition seminars, career counseling, job databases, information on career fairs and unemployment assistance. To find locations and services from your state labor department, go to www.dol.gov/dol/location.htm.

3. Career and Job Fairs

Look for local opportunities to meet employers and recruiters face-to-face at career and job fairs – usually listed in local newspapers, Labor Departments, or www.NationalCareerFairs.com. Some fairs feature a single employer with many openings. Other fairs include multiple employers and are usually focused on a particular occupation, industry, school, community or diversity target.

Rule number one is to *be prepared*. Get a list of the employers represented, and know which ones you want to see. First walk the floor with a map to get an overview. Sort through the companies of the employers in which you are interested, and plan a strategy based on how much time you have. Pick up literature from employers that interest you. Avoid getting trapped at any one employer booth and missing others you want to visit. If you are interested, ask if you can make an appointment later to talk more in depth.

4. Recruiters

Many employers use recruiting firms to help them find and hire candidates. There are 3 types:

1. Contingency recruiters are paid by an employer contingent upon the company hiring a person referred by the recruiter. Contingency recruiters usually handle positions that pay less than \$100,000/year. Generally they aren't the only recruiter trying to fill a position.
2. Retained recruiters are paid a retainer by the employer to find candidates for a specific management or specialty position. They handle positions that pay more than \$100,000/year and represent these positions exclusively. For a listing of the most established firms, go to www.bluesteps.com.
3. Staffing Firms are also paid by employers, some of which will put you on their payroll and provide benefits as you work on temporary and/or part-time work assignments. To find staffing firms near you, go to www.AmericanStaffing.net.

The best national resource for finding contingency or retained recruiters is *The Directory of Executive Recruiters* with more than 13,000+ recruiters and 6,000+ firm locations. It is available in most libraries. You can purchase your copy or pay to use their online database at www.KennedyInformation.com.

The best method for finding good recruiters is to ask your friends, networking contacts and employers. Select recruiters you trust. Meet them in person if at all possible. Even though recruiters are paid by the employers, you want to work with someone who has *your* best interests at heart.

Be careful of recruiters asking you to sign documents other than reference consent forms when you are being considered for a specific position. Be sure to read the fine print of any document you might sign. You don't want to be responsible for paying a placement fee.

ONLINE SEARCHING

Online searching should occupy 15% and no more than 50% of your job search time.

Explore Worldwide Web

It seems that everything you have ever wanted to know is on the Internet – somewhere – especially as it relates to jobs, careers and business opportunities. There are literally thousands of employers that post open positions on their company website – plus another 10,000 other job boards and search engines.

Search Online Job Opportunities

Tips for searching online job postings.

- If you are unemployed, search every day.
- If you are employed, search every weekend.
- Experiment with a variety of keywords and locations.
- Use your networking log and search for jobs with organizations of interest.
- Keep a log of your responses - track website, position, company, date and resume you sent.
- Register for an automatic search agent to notify you of postings in which you are interested.
- When you apply, put keywords that are true of you from the job posting into your resume.
- Start networking for personal referrals to people currently or recently with the target organization.

Search the web's largest job search engine at www.CrossroadsCareer.org/jobs.

- It automatically searches thousands of employer and job sites using keywords and locations.
- Jobs posted on Crossroads Career job board that match your search are always listed first.
- Powered by SimplyHired, it also searches for contract jobs, internships and volunteer openings.

Search employer websites: This is the best and most direct way to find specific jobs with specific employers that match your job search focus. If you see a job posting you want on one of the job posting sites stating the name of the employer, then go right to the employer's website to see if you can find the same and maybe other job postings of interest. Not only can you get the most complete description of the job and candidate criteria on the employer's website, but you'll learn more about the employer, its goals, needs, opportunities and key executives.

Look online for local newspaper websites. Some newspapers online have more jobs posted for their city than anyone else. To quickly search through more than 2,000 newspapers in the U.S. and Canada, go to www.NewspaperLinks.com.

For the most focused and fastest Twitter job board, we recommend www.TweetMyJobs.com that has become the largest Twitter job board in the world with over 6000 vertical job channels segmented by geography, job type and industry.

What about starting your own business either as a freelance contactor or a business owner? Here are the 3 popular websites...

1. www.Guru.com – World's largest marketplace for freelance talent.
2. www.Franchise.org – International Franchise Association with over 1,250 franchisors.
3. www.SBA.gov – U. S. Small Business Administration programs, services, tools, resources.

If you're interested in jobs or careers with Christian organizations, search www.ChristianJobs.com, the largest Christian employment site on the Internet.

For more recommended jobs sites, like our "Top-15 Job Sites" or "Christian Jobs and Careers," login to www.CrossroadsCareer.org and scroll to Career Tools>Search by 6 Steps.

Social Networking Sites

Over the last few years, social networking sites have exploded with millions of members. They can be a great way to make online contacts and bridge them to networking on-the-ground for personal referrals to opportunities.

Warning! Personal pages on social networking sites will likely be found by recruiters and employers who are considering you for a position. Be careful about information and photos they might find.

Good news! Networking sites can be a great place to plant good information about you. Create or modify your member profile than includes your career brand, value, strengths and accomplishments.

You can also search for key contacts who are currently or formerly with employers/customers in which you may have interest. Search by target employer and contact name.

While there are thousands of social media sites, we recommend you consider using these top 3 sites:

1. www.Facebook.com: More than 300 million active users around the world.
2. www.Linkedin.com: World's largest business network with over 50 million members.
3. www.Twitter.com: Real-time short messaging service. Find and follow key contacts.

Getting and Using Email

If you don't have your own personal email account, get one. Do not use your employer's email for job search. A survey 700+ companies by the Society for Human Resource Management found almost three quarters of those companies monitored workers' use of Internet and email. To get an email account, check out these free email services and pick whatever is best for you:

- Gmail from Google: www.Gmail.com
- Yahoo! Mail Classic: www.Yahoo.com
- Windows Live Hotmail: www.Hotmail.com and www.Live.com

If you already have an email account, change or get a new email address that allows you to use some version of your name, such as john.smith@gmail.com or jsmith@yahoo.com. Do not use a "cute" email address, such as hotmama@hotmail.com, or nonsensical names or codes, like bst321@inbox.com.

Here's how you can use email to your advantage:

- Put your email address in resumes, return email address, business cards, letters – everything!
- Put a signature at the bottom of your emails with your name, email address and phone number.
- When networking for referrals or appointments, email asking for help with copy of your resume.
- When emailing a resume, save it using your name, such as Brenda-Jones-Marketing.doc.
- If someone referred you to the person you are emailing, put that person's name on subject line.
- Confirm appointments by email the day before your meeting or interview.
- After every networking phone conversation, email a thank you.
- Write short emails – ideally with only 1 to 4 lines.

Posting Your Resume Online

Only if your job search is not confidential. If you are employed, and are concerned about your employer finding you searching, then we do not recommend posting your resume on any site. If your search is not confidential, post your resume selectively on the most relevant niche-market or employer sites. Be careful to verify each site. Other tips include:

- Monitor how many hits your resume gets. If you get little or none, add new keywords.
- Edit your online resumes weekly-monthly to keep them "active and current."
- Do not pay extra to "boost" your resume. Avoid using a resume distribution services.
- Never give your social security or other confidential numbers to anyone.
- Do not give any information or fill-out any forms until you verify credibility.



READ & WRITE DEVOTIONAL



AND BEHIND DOOR NO. 3

“See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut.”
Revelation 3:8

Make a list of the open doors you see right now. These opportunities could include a chance to call someone, send a resume, have an interview or even accept a work opportunity.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

However, opportunity does not equal God’s will. Be careful of open doors; be sure they’re really from God!

Pray about each open door that you’ve just listed. Write down thoughts that come to your mind.

Pray your thoughts to God, compare thoughts with the Bible, ask friends and check your “peace-o-meter.”

King Solomon asked for wisdom because he said he was like a little child, not knowing how to go out or come in. Later he wrote,

*By wisdom a house is built,
and through understanding it is established;
through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures.*

Proverbs 24:3-4

STEP 4 SEARCHING  **WRAP-UP**

Write down the ideas that were most helpful to you and that you will put into action or practice today.

Write down how you feel now.

Write down your prayer requests for the coming week.



If you have not registered yet, go to www.CrossroadsCareer.org/register and start browsing our webpage of career resources. If you are already registered, log in at www.CrossroadsCareer.org and scroll down to Career Tools > Search by 6 Steps.

Write down the career tools that were helpful.