

Job hunting



It's about a job: Job hunting

Job hunting

Hupane, Kaupane. Whiti te ra. A new sunrise, a new day.

Maori proverb

Finding the right job is a bit like working on a jigsaw puzzle. As you gradually piece together information about different parts of the job market, you finish up with a big picture – and a perspective on where you would comfortably fit into the working scene.

So how do you begin the search? You may have heard people say that only about half of jobs are ever advertised. The rest, people seek out through various avenues. Here are some ideas to help you track down the right job, not just any job.

- **Develop your research skills.**

Begin by asking yourself some questions. 'What do I want to find out? Who can point me in the right direction? Is the information I need on the internet, in the library or the media?'

- **Contact supported employment providers in your area.**

Specialist employment agencies like Workwise exist to support people with experience of mental illness to choose, find and keep their jobs.

- **Build your own support network.**

Let your friends, whanau and acquaintances know that you're looking for work. You'd be surprised how many people hear about job vacancies through word of mouth.

But before you start spreading the word, spend a few minutes drawing a 'mind-map' of everyone you can think of who may be able to help you – you can use the '*network builder*' exercise in this worksheet to help with this.

Each time you speak to someone in your support network, make a note of any helpful suggestions they give you. Try putting their advice into practice. And don't forget to let them know if it works. Everyone appreciates feedback. Always thank people for helping you – besides being the right thing to do, it will encourage them to lend you a hand again.

- **Read the classified advertisements in the daily and local newspapers regularly.**

Not only do they tell you about job vacancies, they help you build up your knowledge of the job market – who's hiring who and what they're paying them.

- **Visit the local internet job sites such as www.jobs.govt.nz, www.trademe.co.nz, www.seek.co.nz, www.netcheck.co.nz.**

Access to job search sites is usually free for job seekers. (If you don't have internet access at home, use your local library's internet service or ask someone you know if you can use theirs.)

“ The job I've got now wasn't advertised. I went in to see the manager when I had got myself right mentally and said to him 'if a position comes up here I'd like to apply.' He offered me the job. ”

James (35), building inspector

In most cases, you can apply for these jobs online. To use these sites you will need an email address. You can set up a free email address at www.gmail.com.

- **Look up the local directories and Yellow Pages for basic information about potential employers.**

Are you keen to work in an art gallery, for example? Then check out where the local galleries are. Which ones could you travel to? Find them on a map if you're not sure. Draw up a list of potential employers to contact – for advice on how to make contact see the '*network builder*' exercise.

- **Contact commercial employment agencies** (also listed under Personnel Consultants and Labour Hire in the Yellow Pages and other directories).

These agencies find temporary, part-time and full-time work for people. They may want to test your skills. Employment agencies normally charge employers, not job seekers. Before using them, check if they charge job seekers any fees.

- **If someone in your support network does the kind of work you're seeking, ask if there's chance you could 'job shadow' them.**

Go to work with them for a day or two and watch what they do. The person needs their employer's agreement first, of course.

- **Use the media (newspapers, radio, TV and internet) to stay up to date with developments in the job market.**

If you want to work in the hospitality industry, for example, and you read about a new hotel opening, why not contact the hotel's owners to enquire about any job vacancies coming up?

- **Find out about employment programmes in your area through your local Citizens Advice Bureau.**

The network builder

Purpose

- To list all the people you come into contact with who may be able to help you with job hunting.
- To think about ways each individual can help.

Method

1. Begin your list with whanau, friends and acquaintances. Next, include other people you come into contact with. Your 'map' may end up naming:

- family/whanau members
- landlords
- friends
- shopkeepers
- neighbours
- consumer groups
- other job seekers
- support people
- Work and Income NZ
- employment consultants
- mental health/traumatic brain injury professionals
- any other groups and organisations you have contact with.

2. Think about the special ways each person or group on your 'map' can assist you with things such as:

- listening and encouragement
- teaching you new skills
- ideas and suggestions
- feedback on your plans and goals
- sharing their experiences of job hunting and working
- expertise and guidance
- relaxation and laughter
- job shadowing
- knowledge of the market, job hunting services and vacancies
- resources, such as the use of a computer/internet access.

How to use *the network builder* to help you find work

If you feel uncomfortable about asking other people for help, you are by no means alone. Do your best to put any shyness aside though. Everyone looking for work needs the support of others. You'll find most people are happy to help wherever they can. So go on, be assertive!

The network builder continued...



MY NETWORK MAP

MAKING CONTACT

Approaching people and organisations you know already

Tell the people that you already know on your 'map' about your skills and the type of work you want. Ask them if they're willing to help you in your quest. If they agree, thank them and suggest that if they hear of a vacancy that would suit you, they call you or mention your name to a prospective employer on your behalf.

Approaching people and organisations you don't know

Where job hunting is concerned, the best way to contact people and organisations you don't know is to call them up on the telephone and ask for some information. Here's how:

- Make a list of the information you want from the person or organisation before phoning. (See page 4 for some sample questions if you're stuck for ideas.) However, this isn't the time to ask outright for a job!
- If you're not sure who's the best person to speak to, explain to the person answering your call that you're looking for information to help with your job search. Ask who they recommend you talk with. Find out the person's full name, their job title and the best time to call back.
- Personalise the sample script outline on the next page with your own details and your own questions. Practice what you want to say before you phone.
- Your aim is to get the person to agree to meet you for a short interview! Why? Because in a face-to-face situation you're more likely to make a lasting impression.
- Have pen and paper ready so you can write things down, such as names and telephone numbers.

Phoning people you don't know

- Introduce yourself

Hello, I'm [redacted]

- Explain why you are calling. If someone has referred you say who the person was.

[redacted] *suggested I call you because I'm looking for work*
as [redacted] *in* [redacted]

- Speak clearly and get to the point quickly.
- Briefly describe your background and work objective. Ask if they know of any employers looking to hire someone with your skills. They may come up with some names of other employers you can contact. Write them down.
- Ask if it's convenient to have a short meeting of between 15 to 20 minutes with the person to discuss the information you're seeking.

"Would you mind meeting with me for a few minutes to tell me a little more about
working in the [redacted] *industry and what I can expect if I*
work as a [redacted] *?"*

- If the person agrees to meet with you, set a time that suits you both and thank them for their time.
- If the person doesn't agree to meet with you – perhaps they're very busy – they may ask what sort of information they can help you with over the phone. Work through the list of questions you prepared.
- Offer to send a copy of your CV for the person to keep on file should a job come up in the future.
- With a bit of luck, the person already has a job opening that would suit you. In which case, they may ask you to send in your CV or to come in for an interview.
- Before meeting with the person, ask your Workwise employment consultant to give you the 'It's about a job' interview guidelines worksheet. Familiarise yourself with these guidelines. Prepare a list of questions to ask. Either remember the list or take the list with you to the meeting so you can refer to it. Of course, make sure you dress smartly, arrive on time and have a copy of your CV with you.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK PEOPLE YOU DON'T KNOW

"How did you get into _____ (the job/industry the person works in)?"

"What are some of the current issues in _____?"

"Where do you think a person like me would fit into the industry?" (Briefly describe your skills.)

"Where do most people find out about job opportunities within the industry?"

"Who else do you recommend I talk to?"

