



Job Hunting Techniques

and making yourself more employable

How to find a job

Once you have decided on the type of job you are hunting for you will need to know where to look for the vacancies.

Jobs are advertised in your local Connexions Centre as well as Job Centre Plus but more and more jobs are being advertised on the internet, so start surfing for vacancies.



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Web based job search

When you are looking for jobs on the internet the wealth of websites advertising jobs can be overwhelming. In addition to that when you click on some of them, you may be disappointed to find that they don't have the jobs you are looking for.

Below is a list of websites to get you started with your internet job search:

Jobs advertised through Connexions:	www.connexions-bs.co.uk
Jobcentre vacancies	www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk
Local government and council	www.solihull.gov.uk
	www.birmingham.gov.uk
	www.lgjobs.com
	www.publicsectorcareers.org
Topjobs	www.topjobs.co.uk
Monster	www.monster.co.uk
Vacancies from regional press	www.fish4jobs.co.uk
Vacancies in higher education	www.jobs.ac.uk
Jobs in Education	www.tes.co.uk
	www.jobs.ac.uk
	www.jobsinfe.co.uk
National graduate vacancies	www.prospects.ac.uk
	www.hobsons.com
	www.targetjobs.co.uk

More and more companies are advertising vacancies on their own websites. So if you are interested in working for a specific company check out their web site if they have one.



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News Papers

Another good way of finding vacancies is in your local newspapers, so make sure you check them all out. The Birmingham Mail advertises jobs every Thursday but don't worry if you forget to pick up a copy you can check out all the vacancies on their website at www.jobs-midlands.co.uk.

National newspapers including The Guardian and The Times also advertise jobs. You can find them on the respective websites.

The hidden job market

Many employers do not need to advertise their vacancies as they already have lots of interest. Sending out speculative letters with your CV to employers is a good way of letting them know you are interested in their company and you have the skills they are looking for.

You can use directories like the yellow pages or the online version www.yell.com, to help you find employers to contact. You should ideally telephone the company first to identify the manager or person who deals with recruitment and address your letter to them. Follow up your letter with a telephone call to show you have genuine interest and try to arrange a meeting to discuss your skills and any job possibilities.

Employment agencies

Employment agencies offer jobs at many different skills levels and usually have temporary positions available. Agencies often specialise in a particular area of work, for example office work, health care or hospitality.

You will need to make contact with the agency and register with them. Registration may involve a short interview where you can talk about your skills and experience and also discuss what work you are looking for.

Local agencies include www.reed.co.uk and www.pertemps.co.uk. You can also use www.agencycentral.co.uk to search for other local employment agencies.

Networking

You can often find jobs through your contacts. Your family and friends may know of vacancies where they work or in their local area - ask them to keep a look out for you. If you find out about a job that isn't quite right for you but might be right for a friend, let them know - they may repay the favour one day.

Job Information

If you are interested in researching and finding out information about a particular job you can use <http://www.connexions-direct.com/jobs4u/>. This website will provide you with information about what work is involved, pay scale information, what qualifications are needed and also where you can go for further information on any jobs you are interested in.



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Labour market information

Information is collected all the time about what is happening in the world of work. This is often called Labour Market Information or LMI.

LMI is important as it can give you a realistic view of what is happening in the world of work. Knowing about how many and what types of vacancies there are, how work is changing and what employers are looking for can help you to:

- Make sensible plans for your future
- Know more about the qualifications and employability skills you will need for jobs
- Find work

You can find out more about labour market information by visiting one of the following web sites:

- Local LMI can be found using:
<http://www.connexions-bs.co.uk/main.php?section=3954>
- Diploma LMI can be found on: <http://www.iagworkforce.co.uk/site/iag/content/free-downloads/free-downloads---home>
- Sector careers LMI can be found on:
<http://www.sectorcareersinfo.co.uk/>
- For detailed LMI Analysis see:
www.nomisweb.co.uk

How can you make yourself more employable?

Whether you have just finished your course or you are an experienced employee, the current economic climate means that competition for new jobs is growing fiercer every day.

In this section we hope to provide you with information on how to make yourself more employable and also where to look for jobs.

What employers really want

The first step is to make sure you understand what employers are actually looking for. Below is a list of ten skills and qualities employers look for in potential employees.

1. Honesty and integrity
2. Basic literacy skills
3. Basic oral communication skills
4. Reliability
5. Hardworking and having a good work ethic
6. Numeracy skills
7. A positive, 'can do' attitude
8. Punctuality
9. The ability to meet deadlines
10. Team working and co-operation skills

Even if you're a seasoned worker, this top ten is a good starting point. These are highly valued skills at any level.

Focus on you

Now that you know a few skills and qualities that employers look for make a list of the ones you feel you have. More importantly make a list of the skills or qualities you lack, and think about how you could improve on them.

To do this, decide on the job type you really want, then look online or in the paper for ads offering that job. What skills and qualifications are flagged up as being 'essential' time and time again?

Now that you have a list of qualities and skills needed for the job you are interested in match them against your own skills, qualities and experiences and consider ways you could add more to your list.



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Improving your employability skills

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Work experience (paid or unpaid)

Employers are always seeking out people with experience. Most people will acquire experience of some kind through holiday or part time employment. Although the work may seem unskilled or routine it can help to develop your transferable skills (e.g. team working, communication and customer service skills).

Gaining relevant experience can be more difficult but is possible through placements and work shadowing.

Voluntary Work

Employers value any voluntary work that you do and the skills you gain will be transferable to whichever career you eventually choose. Public and private organisations such as Community Service Volunteers (CSV), V (the volunteering organisation for 16 – 25 year olds in England) or a local volunteer bureau may be able to find you regular hours per week.

Birmingham Voluntary Service Council

138 Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 6DR

Tel: 0121 643 4343

Email: admin@bvsc.org

V

Information about volunteering for 16 – 25 year olds:
www.vinspired.com

Do It

Volunteering opportunities:
www.do-it.org/wanttovolunteer

Extra curricular activities

Getting involved in activities outside of study is very important. It gives you added information to put on your CV and indicates to employers the kind of person that you are – your interests, your abilities and the kind of skills you choose to use.

The activities you take part in, during your spare time are valuable in developing transferable and career management skills. It is important to recognise that activities you do outside work and study may enable you to develop relevant employability skills.

Polish your online reputation

Research shows that some employers are starting to 'Google' job applicants – and many even hunt them down on Facebook, Bebo and MySpace.

So as a precaution remove all embarrassing postings and photos, apply maximum privacy settings and generally polish your online reputation.

When putting your email address on your CV or an application form only use one that is professional. Try to avoid using an email address that has your nickname or has silly phrases in them. Try to get one as close to your name as possible.

On the other hand you could make the internet work for you if you're a little web-savvy, you could create a personal web site to present a professional face to the world. This could help you demonstrate your communication skills, initiative and creativity.