

Finding vacancies – *including the hidden ones*

Many vacancies are never advertised. Some put this figure as high as 70%. Advertising is very expensive and some companies received so many speculative applications they don't advertise at all. (A *speculative application* is one that is made to a company when a vacancy has not been formally advertised. Employers are usually happy to receive these as it shows great motivation by the person applying and saves on advertising costs. See *Covering and Speculative letters for more information about how this could work for you*). **Small companies often take people through word of mouth.**

Keep positive and realistic. The process of finding vacancies, applying and going for interviews will take time and energy. Learn from disappointments – ask for feedback.

Talk to your local Connexions Centre. They're in regular contact with hundreds of local employers and training providers who are looking for the right people to fill vacancies, apprenticeships and other training opportunities. Develop a good relationship with the staff. Tell them exactly what you're looking for.



Think about:

Employers are usually very happy to receive speculative applications – it can save them advertising fees.

Make sure your friends and family know what sort of job you're looking for too.

Use local job fairs to speak to employers about what they're looking for and how they recruit. Go prepared with copies of your CV. Dress appropriately – you never know who you might be talking to.

Many employers still use newspapers (including the free ones like Metro), magazines and trade magazines to advertise their vacancies. Most libraries will hold reference copies of latest editions.

Get as many people as possible looking for you. Sign up with recruitment agencies and the Connexions service. Over 18s can use the local Jobcentre Plus office. Make sure your friends and family know what you're looking for too.

Use business directories for details of companies. Use the information to research the companies further and customise speculative letters and CVs. Double-check that any contact names given are still current. Libraries, Connexions centres and Jobcentre Plus offices usually hold reference copies or use the online versions.

There are lots of online job search websites. You can search these by type of work, location and salary. Most large organisations use their own website to advertise vacancies.

Be prepared to progress to your ideal job – not walk straight into it. You may need to consider a part-time or temporary job to get you into the right company or improve your skills. Remember – it's easier to get a job when you're already in work.

Scan the local newspapers and watch the local news. They'll cover what's happening in the business world, for example, company expansions, new developments and government contracts. Make contact before the jobs are advertised.

Visit your local business park or office complex. Gather company brochures, talk to receptionists, get names of key people and send them a speculative letter plus a tailored CV.

Volunteer to work unpaid or on a trial basis. This is a really good way to show off your skills and attitudes. Employers can see how you fit in and what you can do.



Be prepared to progress to your ideal job – not walk straight into it.

Gather company brochures, talk to receptionists, get names of key people and send them a speculative letter plus a tailored CV.