Some jobs are filled without being advertised, which is commonly referred to as the Hidden Job Market. You will have heard the expression that "it is all about who you know", which is one very important means of accessing this marketplace. It is important to be actively talking to people on and off campus, family, friends or contacts in the industry. See our section on the hidden job market for tips and insights into effective networking.

The hidden job market refers to jobs that are never officially advertised, with some estimates being up to 60-80% of all jobs. Finding opportunities in the hidden job market involves identifying, researching and approaching employers and actively networking or talking to people.

**NETWORKING**

In the context of job hunting, networking simply means speaking to other people and building relationships. More specifically, networking involves framing conversation around things such as:

- what a particular industry or organisation is like to work in
- if they know of anyone who might have, or know of, any work opportunities
- who would be a useful person to talk to about job hunting in your field
- promoting yourself - be positive and truthful about yourself and your skills in relation to a prospective organisation's needs

Through these conversations and relationships you’ll hear about opportunities before they get advertised or find out important information that might help your job search.

**WHO IS IN YOUR NETWORK**

Your network includes everyone you know, both personally and professionally. The wider your network, the more opportunities you have to become connected with the right people. Your network could include friends, family, work colleagues, current or previous employers, fellow students and student groups, lecturers, Macquarie Careers and Employment staff, Macquarie University Alumni, professional/industry associations and networks, and Macquarie Ambassadors program.

**EXPANDING YOUR NETWORK**

You never know who might have an interesting contact or piece of advice for you so get into the habit of talking about your goals and what you are looking for with everyone you know. Networking does not come naturally to many people, but don’t be shy, most people will be pleased to be able to help you.

You should develop a networking plan and set yourself some goals around who you are going to contact, how often and what method is appropriate - email, coffee, meeting etc. Remember to work on keeping existing relationships strong while continuing to add new ones and consider how to go about adding new contacts to your network. In a lot of industries it is about who you know, so make sure to include in your plan goals for expanding your network and growing relationships with people in the field(s) you are interested in working in.

**RESEARCHING**

You do not need a contact or a job advertisement to introduce yourself to an organisation, instead you could do some research to identify possible targets and ‘cold call’ them. Your research may include:

- Search online to find lists of employers in specific fields
- Look at the websites of professional organisations for their member list
- Career Hub - list of organisations that have advertised roles to Macquarie students in the past (click on Browse Organisations)
• Read industry publications

• Informational Interviews

APPROACHING EMPLOYERS

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

A good way to find out about what it is like to work in a particular field is to interview someone working in a role you aspire to work in. Approaching someone for an informational interview enables you to develop a contact in the industry. An information interview is:

• A short meeting (maximum 15 minutes) with a person in a job, industry or organisation you are interested in. It is very important to arrive on time
• You can ask questions and gather helpful information, advice and more contacts by asking about the career knowledge of the other person
• Possible areas to cover are how that person entered the industry, changes since entering it, what that person likes about the organisation/industry/their role and what not, upcoming challenges, industry trends etc.
• Seek information, but do not ask for a job
• Ask if there is anyone else you could speak to, and if you could mention your interviewee’s name when contacting the second person
• Thank the person for his/her time and send a thank you letter or email

Your approach can be by phone, email or, in some cases, in person. Your method of contact will depend on your confidence, the industry, and the size and culture of the organisation.

Whether you make contact by email or phone, make an initial call to find out who would be the best person to speak to. Before contacting the appropriate person, carefully consider what you want to say and how you want to say it.

PHONE CONTACT

• While phone conversations can easily take different directions, you can prepare in a few different ways:
  • Prepare and practise your introduction.
  • Mention a particular incident in which you were exposed to the employer, such as saying that you read about them in an article or saw them at a careers fair.
  • Explain why you have contacted that particular organisation and what you have to offer them.
  • Request a time to come in and speak to them further about working in the industry.
  • Consider how you will respond to someone who does not want to speak nor has no opportunities available.

EMAIL CONTACT

• Employers are swamped by emails, so your message really needs to break through the clutter.
• Write succinctly and try to grab their attention. Don’t tell them your life story; instead focus on the details that will make them want to hear more about you.
• Note that you will follow up the email with a phone call in few days as an email alone can be easily overlooked.

ELEVATOR SPEECH

A positive, truthful, 30-second self-promotion when meeting someone for the first time, for example at an industry event. It’s called an elevator speech because 30 seconds is the average length of a lift (an elevator) ride. An elevator speech also answers the question: ‘What do you do?’

For example ‘My name’s Kate Barnes and I’ve just finished a Postgraduate Diploma in Social Health at Macquarie University. I’ve been a volunteer telephone counsellor for Lifeline for the last 18 months and plan to work full time in the community sector’

Use your elevator speech when appropriate. Make sure your words are positive, your tone of voice is enthusiastic and your body language is consistent with your words and tone of voice.