It can be challenging looking for a job and in times of high competition, it is important to cast your net wide and include a mixture of advertised and non-advertised job options in your job search. Most people limit their job search to advertised opportunities, but the reality is that most people actually find employment through non-advertised positions. These non-advertised positions are often found through friends, family, acquaintances, professional contacts, teachers and the people you come into contact with on a daily basis – through community groups, sports clubs etc. Its important that you spend as much time on these avenues as you do applying for advertised positions.

This fact sheet will give you some tips on how to start your job search and where to look for employment.

**MAKING DIRECT CONTACT WITH A POTENTIAL EMPLOYER**

One of the most daunting ways (or so it seems at first) is to make direct contact with an employer (regardless of whether they have advertised a position or not). However, there is a good way to do this and it is not always wise to cold call an employer without doing some initial research. The time spent researching will expand your knowledge of the job market, can help clarify your career options and further develop your self-marketing skills.

By looking beyond large well-known companies and making direct contact, you are displaying initiative and a positive attitude, qualities highly regarded by employers. You will need time, patience and good research skills. Developing these skills now will stand you in good stead throughout your career.

**How do you find potential employers?**

**Graduate Destination Survey** - a list of employers who recruited RMIT graduates in your course over the past three years. Access this through [http://www.rmit.edu.au/careers/graddestinations](http://www.rmit.edu.au/careers/graddestinations)

**Business sections of newspapers** and the *Australian Financial Review*. Targeted sections such as the IT section of *The Age*. Also magazines such as the *Bulletin* and *Time*. Scan regularly for up-to-date information on companies of interest.

**Specialist magazines** and trade journals and directories – ask your library for those in your area of interest.

**Yellow Pages** [www.yellowpages.com.au](http://www.yellowpages.com.au) – use the index to refine the type of organisation you are interested in.

**IBISWorld** [www.ibisworld.com.au](http://www.ibisworld.com.au) for up-to-date reports on Australian industries (also U.S., Indonesia and Taiwan). Detailed company information is available at a cost.

**Electronic databases available online through the RMIT Library** [www.rmit.edu.au/library](http://www.rmit.edu.au/library) – these allow you to search by company name, industry or subject for published articles. They include: *Australian Business Intelligence* (ABIX), *Australian Public Affairs Information Service* (APAIS) and *Dow Jones Interactive*.

**Industry and Professional Associations**. Trade unions and employer organisations can provide useful information. Check newsletters and membership lists. *The Directory of Australian Associations* is available at most libraries.

**General Directories** such as *Australia’s Top 500 Companies*, *Who Owns Whom*, *Australia’s 100 Fastest Growing Companies*, *Jobson’s Yearbook of Australian Companies*, *Kompass* and *Business Who’s Who* list both public and private companies.

**Annual Reports** are available from major libraries and the Stock Exchange, or directly from the company. They are free from public companies and contain plenty of useful information about the companies’ activities, goals and structures.

**What should you find out?**

- Size of organisation
- Which sector – public, private, not for profit
- Ownership
- Location, parent company, subsidiaries, branches
- Products and services, and, if a large dispersed company – what is done where.
THE NEXT STEP

So, having identified relevant organisations to approach now comes the challenging part – making contact! You may like to refer to the CD&E Fact Sheet ‘Telephoning Employers’ for tips on how to make phone contact (you may need to do this to check the name of the person to whom to address your letter, or for further information). Now you can indicate a real knowledge of the company and explain your interest in being employed there in a carefully targeted letter accompanying your resume. Remember though, that the letter should focus on what YOU have to offer, not lots of facts about the company.

WHAT KIND OF WORK?

The changing nature of work today means that you can no longer expect the kind of full-time permanent occupation you may have once regarded as your right. It is important to be flexible in your approach and view each opening as stepping stone.

Contract, part-time and casual work all offer the chance to get your foot in the door, to prove yourself, learn or practise skills, clarify your career options, demonstrate your flexibility, extend your networks, and gain references.

BEFORE YOU START

Remember that finding work is an exercise in marketing - and you are the product! Before beginning any job search, it is vital that you do a self-assessment and know what it is you are offering employers - and how best to package it.

Many opportunities are lost through poorly presented written applications, telephone techniques and interview skills. Use the resources available to you at CD&E, attend workshops, practise with friends and arrange practice interviews with a careers counsellor.

NON-ADVERTISED OPPORTUNITIES (THE HIDDEN JOB MARKET)

NETWORKING is making contact with people who may be able to assist you with your job search. They may not be in a position to offer you employment, but they could provide you with other names, advice or an insight into an organisation, industry or profession.

Networking is talking to people and everyone CAN do that! To start, let everyone you know that you are looking for employment. Ask if they know anyone in your field who works for the organisations in which you are interested.

Once you have some contacts, ask them questions about how they got their job, what their organisation is like to work for and what they do day to day. This will assist you in making informed decision about what sort of work you like and what organisations you’d like to work for.

For more information on how to network see the CD&E Fact Sheet ‘Networking’ and watch the video ‘Can I have a few minutes of your time?’ in the Careers Library, City Campus (14.4)

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS offer good opportunities to network and keep in touch with what is happening in your field. Attend seminars and networking sessions – make the most of your membership! To find your relevant professional association check out the listing on the CD&E website at www.rmit.edu.au/careers/students
Directories of graduate employers are published each year. They are available in the Careers Library and include:

Graduate Opportunities [http://www.graduateopportunities.com/]

Both publications list organisations offering graduate and vacation/internship employment with application details. (Please note that not all organisations that offer graduate employment are listed).

Internet job sites
- [www.mycareer.com.au]
- [www.careerone.com.au]
- [www.seek.com.au]
- [www.jobsearch.gov.au]
- [www.employment.byron.com.au]
- [www.gradlink.edu.au]

Company websites often advertise details of their recruitment programs. Look at the graduate recruitment listing on the CD&E website – [www.rmit.edu.au/careers]

Newspapers advertise graduate positions throughout the year in local, state, national and overseas papers.

Trade and Professional Journals may advertise jobs in your area. Look them up at the RMIT Library [www.rmit.edu.au/library]

And of course, always look for advertised opportunities. While the following options maybe obvious, there may be a few options listed here that you haven’t thought to include.

### NON-ADVERTISED OPPORTUNITIES (THE HIDDEN JOB MARKET)

**RECRUITMENT AGENCIES** are paid by employers to locate appropriate personnel to fill available positions. They:

- Will therefore act in the interests of the employer, not the applicant
- Will not actively seek positions for you
- May recruit by advertising, selecting a person already on their books or headhunting, depending on the level of appointment.
- Are unlikely to be useful to new graduates with little experience.

If you wish to include agencies in your job search, locate appropriate ones through job advertisements for your field of work, check the **Yellow Pages under Employment Services or Employment Consultants** or look at the web site of Recruiters Consultants Society of Australia [www.rcsa.com.au].

And of course, always look for advertised opportunities. While the following options maybe obvious, there may be a few options listed here that you haven’t thought to include.

### ADVERTISED OPPORTUNITIES

See us at [www.rmit.edu.au/careers] for details about:

**RMIT e-Jobs** [http://ejobs.rmit.edu.au]

**Careers Expo** (March each year).

**Information Sessions**

**Guest Employer Presentations**

**Job Vacancies by Occupation** specialist job sites, such as environmental science, engineering, hospitality, travel and IT.