

STEP 4: SEARCHING

Finding Opportunities

As you are looking for the work God has prepared for you, you want to be a good steward of your positive **ATTITUDE**, understanding of your unique **APTITUDE**, and clear focus on the market place—your **ALTITUDE**. Here is a key verse to remember as you search for opportunities.

The mind of man plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps.
Proverbs 16:9

Remember to diligently use both of your eyes in finding opportunities – one eye for looking as you have planned and the other eye for seeing as the Lord directs your steps. Sometimes finding the right opportunity comes from seeing something you are not seeking. Now you're ready to begin searching. The best way to explore opportunities is the combination of...

ONLINE SEARCHING and ON-THE-GROUND NETWORKING

ONLINE SEARCHING

Explore Worldwide Web: It seems that everything you have ever wanted to know is on the Internet – somewhere – especially as it relates to career exploration and job search. If you want to find opportunities today, using the web is absolutely required. Look at these facts...

- ❖ In 2006, research of 73 leading employers indicated that over 50% of their 2005 new hires were sourced from the Internet
- ❖ In 2007, job postings are up 25% over 2006. That's 4.3 million jobs posted on 1200 job boards in just one month alone (May 2007).

There are thousands ways to use the Internet to explore career opportunities. Here are a few...

- ❖ Tips for searching job postings. Most employers post the majority of their open positions on their company website – plus there are over 10,000 other job board websites on the Internet. Here are some tips to keep in mind:
 - Search often and reply quickly
 - Many postings are only “valid” for a few days, so look every day on the major sites
 - Copy keywords that are true of you from the job posting, and put them in your resume
 - Keep a log of your responses - track web site, position, company, date and resume you sent
- ❖ Visit all of the Big-4 job sites. Not only look for specific jobs that match your search focus, but also browse the sites to learn about other related opportunities.
 - www.monster.com
 - www.careerbuilder.com
 - www.hotjobs.yahoo.com
 - www.jobbankinfo.org

- ❖ Search employer websites: The best and most direct way to find specific jobs with specific employers that match your job search focus. If you see a job posting you want on one of the newspaper or general job posting sites with the name of the employer, then go to the employer's website to see if you can find the same and maybe other job postings of interest. Not only can you get the most complete description of the job and candidate criteria on the employer's website, but you can also learn more about the employer, its goals, needs, opportunities and key executives.
- ❖ Look in local newspapers online. They are hot: 59 million people visited newspaper websites on average during the second quarter of 2007. Some newspapers online have more jobs posted for their city than anyone else, including the big three job sites. To quickly find newspaper websites by city and state, go to www.newspaperlinks.com.
- ❖ Find smaller, new, professional, and niche job sites that are related to your career focus by occupation, industry and location. Be sure you check all trade and professional associations and magazine websites that relate to your career focus. Here are just a few popular sites to check...
 - www.6figurejobs.com – \$100,000+ income sales, professional and management jobs
 - www.bluesteps.com – 5,000 search professionals at leading search firms worldwide
 - www.snagajob.com – #1 site for hourly employment
 - www.usajobs.opm.gov – jobs with federal government
 - www.universityjobs.com – gateway higher education careers
 - www.net-temp.com – leading job board for temporary and temp-to-perm
 - www.craigslist.org – Local classifieds including jobs in 460 cities
- ❖ Are you interested in Christian job banks, career centers, and placement agencies? This one link takes you to 44 site listings: www.crosssearch.com/Business_and_Finance/Jobs_and_Careers/.
- ❖ What about starting your own business either as a freelance contactor or a business owner? Here are the three best websites...
 - www.guru.com – World's largest marketplace for freelance talent
 - www.franchise.org – International Franchise Association with over 1,250 franchisors
 - www.sba.gov – U. S. Small Business Administration programs, services, tools and resources

Post your resume if your job search is not confidential. If you are employed, and you are concerned about your employer finding out that you are searching, then it is better to not post your resume on any site. If your search is not confidential, then post your resume the big 4 job sites, plus the most relevant niche-market, newspaper and most especially employer sites that provide for resume posting. More and more recruiters are searching resume posting sites using keyword searches, rather than just waiting for people to respond to their job posting. When you register on a job site or post your resume, you may also be able sign-up for special automatic email notices when new jobs you want are posted. A great way to search without looking!

Here are tips to maximize the opportunities for your resume to be “picked” for the job you want:

- ❖ Use WORD format for submitting attached resumes. Best font to use is Times Roman.
- ❖ Use the built-in resume builder template with a .TXT format of your resume to cut and paste.
- ❖ Find keywords in jobs you want – put them in a keyword section at the end of your resume.
- ❖ Use nouns or titles instead of verbs, such as “Project Manager” versus “Managed Projects.”
- ❖ Put in companies by both the short and long names, such as Kroger and The Kroger Co.
- ❖ Answer online questions about travel, relocating, years in industry and degrees truthfully.
- ❖ Monitor how many hits your resume gets. If you get little or none, add new keywords.
- ❖ Edit your online resumes weekly-monthly to keep them “active and current.”
- ❖ Do not pay extra to “boost” your resume. Avoid using a resume distribution service.

Online Social Networking becomes Job Networking: With the dawn of social networking sites a few years back, a doorway to a whole new world of communication, and in many ways job hunting opened.

Beware! Warning! Your personal pages on social sites can be found by recruiters and employers who are considering you for a position. Be careful what personal information and photos they might find.

On the other hand, networking sites can be a great place to plant good info about you for a good career future! You can also search for key contacts through networking sites. Be thoughtful and careful as you consider just a small sampling of these sites...

- ❖ www.MySpace.com major social networking site with over 135 million accounts
- ❖ www.Linkedin.com is a relationship network for connections to hiring managers, HR and recruiters.
- ❖ www.Jobfox.com is a hub for passive job seekers started by founder of Career Builder
- ❖ www.Alumni.Net. Find fellow alumni from companies, schools and other organizations
- ❖ www.Classmates.com. Find high school, college, military and workplace connections.
- ❖ www.Meetup.com/topics/workcar. Find groups of people with similar interests
- ❖ www.Vault.com/community/mb/industries.jsp. Online message boards for networking and info.

Use Email: If you don't have your own personal email account, get one. Do not use your employer's email for job search, unless you have permission. A survey of more than 700 companies by the Society for Human Resource Management found that almost three-quarters of those companies monitored their workers' use of the Internet and check employee email.

If you already have a personal Internet service and/or email account, change your current personal email address or get a new email address that allows you to use some version of your name, such as john.smith@gmail.com or jsmith@yahoo.com. Do not use a "cute" email address, such as hotmama@hotmail.com, or nonsensical names or codes, like bst321@inbox.com.

You don't have to own a computer or subscribe to an Internet service provider to use email. You can go to a friend, the local library or department of labor and use their computers. To get your own free email account, check out these five top free email services and pick whatever is best for you:

- ❖ Gmail from Google: www.gmail.com
- ❖ Inbox.com: www.inbox.com
- ❖ Yahoo! Mail Classic: www.yahoo.com
- ❖ Fast Mail Guest Account: www.fastmail.fm
- ❖ Windows Live Hotmail: www.hotmail.com

Here's how you can use email to advantage:

- ❖ Put your email address in resumes, return email address, business cards, letters – everything!
- ❖ After every networking phone conversation, email a thank you with a copy of your resume
- ❖ When trying to get an appointment or introduction, email a brief note, sometimes with resume
- ❖ Confirm appointments by email the day before or the day of your meeting or interview
- ❖ When networking for referrals, email asking for help with copy of your resume
- ❖ If someone referred you to the person you are emailing, put that person's name on subject line
- ❖ Write short emails – ideally with only one to four lines plus a signature at the bottom with...
 - Your name, Email address and Preferred phone number
- ❖ When emailing a resume, be sure your resume is saved using your name, such as Bill_Smith_Resume.doc Brenda_Jones_Marketing.doc to help employers file and find your resume.

Using the Internet should occupy at least 20% to no more than 50% of your job search time. The balance of your time investment is connecting personally with people. Online search using web and email works best only in combination with on-the-ground networking! Here is an example...

Let's say you find the job of your dreams on a job board, not only reply immediately, but also begin to ask anybody and everybody you know who they know with the employer. Network for personal referrals to the recruiter or hiring manager so you can contact the contact – personally!

ON-THE-GROUND NETWORKING

It's not just what you know, it's who you know that counts! Networking for personal referrals is by far the most fruitful method of finding good opportunities. A private corporate study demonstrated that applicants who had been personally referred for a job were 42 times more likely to be selected than those without personal referrals.

Let's say that again. According to this study, your odds of being selected for a job are 42 times greater if you are personally referred. That is a 4,200% better chance!

Why is this true? First, you are not an "unknown." The employer knows someone who knows you.

Second, you are considered "good" by association with the person whom the employer knows. All the positive traits associated with the referring person are associated with you.

Third, networking helps you find the "hidden job market." Most employers first try to recruit people through their personal contacts before they advertise a position, list it on the Internet, or place it with a recruiter. Of all the jobs that get filled, how many are part of this "hidden job market?"

85%!

Amazing isn't it. Most of the available jobs are not listed anywhere. You can only find them through personal referrals. People like hiring people they know through other people.

So how do you network to get personal referrals?

1. *Find the Contacts*

- ❖ Make a list of all the people you know who work in and around the job and industry you're targeting. You never know who knows someone who can help you!
- ❖ Find trade and professional associations related to your focus. Many of them have local chapters with monthly meetings that you can attend. Often local chapters have job listings and networking opportunities.
- ❖ Read publications relating to your focus. Check your local paper every day for news and feature stories about your target job and industry. Either subscribe or regularly go to the library to read the one or two key trade publications for the industry.
- ❖ Keep updating your target contact list. Every time you talk to a referral, try to get at least two more contacts.

2. *Contact the Contacts*

Calling people about your career interests can be challenging. It seems even harder when you don't know the people you are calling. Here are some ways to become more effective.

- ❖ Use the names of personal referrals who gave you permission to use their names. Even better, ask your referrals if they will take a moment to call ahead on your behalf.
- ❖ Practice first with people you know best.
- ❖ Be in a quiet place with few distractions when you make your calls.
- ❖ Be focused with your networking script of what you are going to say. Have your **30-SECOND "ELEVATOR PITCH"** next to the phone.
- ❖ Elements of your conversation should include the following:

Introduce yourself. *"Good morning (afternoon). My name is (give first and last name). I was referred by (name of referral). Is (name of referred person) available?"*

Reintroduce yourself if needed. *"Good morning (afternoon). My name is (repeat your name). (Name of referral) suggested that I call you."*

Clear the time. *"Do you have a couple of minutes to talk, or would another time be more convenient?"* Always hold conversations with open hands, and do not press to get the time. If later is better for the person you are calling, then ask to book a short phone appointment later. *"When might be a good time for you?"*

Give the reason for your call. *"I am at a crossroads in my career and wanted to ask for your help."*

Ask for the information you want (contacts within a specific company, suggestions on companies that fit certain criteria, advice on how to approach a certain situation, etc.). If you want contacts, you might say, *"I am networking for referrals to (name of company or people in specific kinds of jobs)."* You might also say, *"I am looking for (give three parts of your focus—the job, the industry or company, the location). Do you know anyone in (name of company or type of position)?"*

Watch your watch! As you see the 2-minute mark coming and going, begin to wrap it up. You might say, *"I want to be thoughtful of your time. May I send you a copy of my resume in case you think of someone or something else later?"* (If yes, get the person's email, fax number, or mailing address—in that order of preference.)

Say thank you. *"Thank you for your time and help. It has been a pleasure talking with you."*

Wrap it up. *"If I have an additional question, may I call you back? Thank you again. Have a great day. Good-bye."*

- ❖ Really be attentive to what is going on with the person you are talking to. If he/she is interested, helpful, and positive, keep the conversation going. If he/she is "short" with you and making concluding types of statements, wrap up your conversation.
- ❖ Make notes on the conversation as soon as you get off the phone.
- ❖ If you are to send something to the person, send it immediately.
- ❖ Call or email the referring person with a thank you for the referral.
- ❖ Continue to improve your scripts as needed.

Here are four other on-the-ground ways to network for personal referrals...

1. ***Job Support and Networking Groups***

Many churches and community service groups have weekly or monthly meetings that offer opportunities to meet others who can help you with contacts, counsel and encouragement. You'll find listings of group meetings in your local daily and business newspapers, as well as on www.crossroadscareer.org. Be sure to take plenty of business cards and copies of your resume, as well as your networking list and a notepad.

2. ***Your State Department of Labor***

Many state Departments of Labor have career centers located in key towns and cities throughout the state. These centers may offer career transition seminars, career counseling, job databases, information on career fairs, and unemployment assistance. To find locations and services from your state labor department, check www.dol.gov/dol/location.htm.

3. ***Career and Job Fairs***

Look for local opportunities to meet employers and recruiters face-to-face at fairs – usually listed in local newspapers, Labor Departments, or www.nationalcareerfairs.com/monster/index.php?p=calendar_2008. Some fairs feature a single employer with many openings. Other fairs include multiple employers and are usually focused on a particular occupation, industry, school, community or diversity target.

Rule number one is to *be prepared*. Get a list of the employers represented, and know which ones you want to see. First walk the floor with a map to get an overview. Sort through the companies you are interested in, and plan strategy based on how much time you have. Pick up literature at booths that interest you. Avoid getting trapped at one booth and missing others you want to visit. If you are interested, ask if you can make an appointment later to talk more in depth.

4. ***Recruiters***

Many employers use recruiting firms to help them find and hire candidates. There are three basic types:

- ❖ **Contingency recruiters** are paid by an employer contingent upon the company hiring a person referred by the recruiter. Contingency recruiters usually handle positions that pay less than \$100,000/year. Generally they aren't the only recruiter trying to fill a position.
- ❖ **Retained recruiters** are paid a retainer by the employer to find candidates for a specific management or specialty position. They handle positions that pay more than \$100,000/year and represent these positions exclusively. For a listing of the most established firms, go to www.bluesteps.com.
- ❖ **Staffing Firms** are also paid employers, some of which will put you on their payroll and provide benefits as you work on temporary and/or part-time work assignments. To find staffing firms near you, go to www.americanstaffing.net/jobseekers/find_company.cfm

The best national resource for finding contingency or retained recruiters is *The Directory of Executive Recruiters* with more than 7,200 offices of 5,300+ search firms. It is available in most libraries. You can purchase your own copy or pay to use their online database at www.kennedyinfo.com.

The best method for finding good recruiters is to ask your friends, networking contacts and employers. Select recruiters you trust. Meet them in person if at all possible. Even though recruiters are paid by the employers, you want to work with someone who has *your* best interests at heart

Be careful of recruiters asking you to sign documents other than reference consent forms when you are being considered for a specific position. Be sure to read the fine print of any document you might sign. You don't want to be responsible for paying a placement fee.



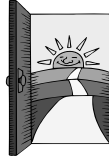
NETWORKING LOG EXERCISE

Make 10 copies of this page before using it. Make more copies as you need them.

Begin by listing as many names of people you know as you can. Think of family members, friends, neighbors, former co-workers, people you go to church with, people you play tennis or golf with, parents of your children's friends, people you went to school with, your lawyer, your accountant, your financial advisor, your dry cleaner, your hair dresser, your auto mechanic, and anyone else you can think of. Gather phone numbers/email addresses for each one. Next, contact at least *five* of them this week. Using your **30-second elevator pitch**, ask them whom they know that you can talk with to help you with your job/career change. Add these new contacts to your Networking Log. Work up to *five* calls a day.

Name/Company/Position	Phone/Email Address	Date of Contact	Referrals

READ & WRITE DEVOTIONAL

**AND BEHIND DOOR NO. 3**

“See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut.”
Revelation 3:8

Make a list of the open doors you see right now. These opportunities could include a chance to call someone, send a resume, have an interview, or even accept a work opportunity.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

However, opportunity does not equal God’s will. Be careful of open doors; be sure they’re really from God!

Pray about each open door that you’ve just listed. Write down thoughts that come to your mind.

Pray the thoughts back to God, compare thoughts with Bible, ask friends, and check your “peace-o-meter.”

King Solomon asked for wisdom because he said he was like a little child, not knowing how to go out or come in. Later he wrote,

*By wisdom a house is built,
and through understanding it is established;
through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures.*
Proverbs 24:3-4

**GO ONLINE**

Log in and on the Career Explorer landing page, point to and select Career Tools – Searching

**SESSION****For the Next Session: STEP 5 – SORTING**

Be ready to talk about what you have learned. Make sure you've gone online to read articles and browse sites that are particularly relevant to your interests and issues right now.

**PRAYER JOURNAL**

Use the space below—or your own journal—to take some notes about your specific prayer requests or insights that you have at this point for yourself or others in your group.