



CONTACTING EMPLOYERS DIRECTLY

The telephone is a great tool for establishing a personal connection, so use it to your advantage. Employers say it's easy to dispose of an anonymous resume, but much harder to turn down an applicant whom they know. Calling people to whom you already have some connection is easier than calling complete strangers, so you'll probably feel more comfortable talking on the phone to hiring managers **after** you have sent them a cover letter and resume, met them at a career fair, or received their name from a mutual acquaintance who suggested you send them a cover letter and resume.

STEP 1. RESEARCH THE FIELD(S) AND JOB FUNCTIONS WHICH INTEREST YOU . . .

Work with a career counselor if you need assistance in focusing your talents and interests into specific areas. The *Encyclopedia of Career Choices for the 1990's*, *150 Best Companies for Liberal Arts Graduates*, *Adams Jobs Almanac*, *Professional Careers Sourcebook*, and *Occupational Outlook Handbook* are examples of general books useful in researching. Books such as *Careers in Marketing*, *The Complete Guide to Environmental Careers*, or *Jobs in Arts and Media Management* go into more detail on specific fields.

STEP 2. TARGET 5 TO 10 ORGANIZATIONS . . .

which might be a fit for you, and research them. Learn names of their major divisions, headquarters, product/services offered. Directories such as *Hoover's Handbook*, *Directory of World Business*, *Corporate Technology Directory*, government directories, and United Way directories of nonprofit organizations are useful. All are on reserve at the CDC. Jackson Library in the Graduate School of Business has excellent resources as well, especially on smaller businesses not covered in national directories.

STEP 3. LEARN HOW TO FIND HIRING MANAGERS . . .

within an organization's operational unit (i.e., marketing, fund development, finance, human resources, engineering, sales, etc.) who have the power to decide whether or not to interview you and offer you a job. To get the name of a hiring manager, call the company headquarters or the office of the Vice President of the division in which you are seeking a position. Ask for an annual report and the name and title of the head of a specific department in which you'd like to work. Check that you have the correct spelling, and ask for their direct phone line. An easier way to get this name might be to conduct a *networking meeting* first with a Stanford alum in the organization (**not** with the hiring manager), asking for advice.* Alumni/ae willing to conduct networking meetings are found at Bowman Alumni House and on the Alumni Association Web site.

STEP 4. WRITE A WELL-RESEARCHED COVER LETTER ** . . .

to the hiring manager, describing your background, what you can contribute to the work of the organization and the kind of position in which you are interested. Send your letter and resume, saying at the end of your letter that you will call in one week to follow up on your letter.

STEP 5. PREPARE FOR YOUR CALL. . .

Focus on your primary goal which is to schedule an interview, preferably with this hiring manager or another to whom you could be referred. Project a positive, courteous attitude; be brief and to the point; use a pleasant and enthusiastic tone of voice. If there are no openings, you can ask for a referral to another potential employer. Because of their decision-making power, hiring managers tend to have strong networks and may know other people interested in interviewing recent Stanford graduates.

STEP 6. LEARN HOW TO GET PAST “SCREENERS” . . .

Be polite and courteous, but keep the initiative. Rather than leaving your name for them to return your call, ask when might be a better time to call. The following script presents some ways to deal with common obstacles a protective secretary or receptionist will present:

Screener: *“Good morning. Global Enterprises Marketing Department.”*

Candidate: *“Good morning. This is Maria Jackson. Is Tom Walker in, please?”*

Screener: *“I’ll check. May I tell him what this is regarding?”*

Candidate: *“It’s regarding information I forwarded to him last week. I’m sure he’ll be familiar with it. Is he available?”*

Screener: *“I’m sorry. He is in a meeting. Would you like to leave a message?”*

Candidate: *“Please tell him that Maria Jackson called. My number is 650.725.9999. However, I’m going to be hard to reach. I’d be happy to call again later. When do you expect him to be available?”*

Tip: If this still doesn’t work, try calling before 9:00 am, during lunch, or after 5:00 pm, when the hiring manager is more likely to answer directly. This also applies if you repeatedly encounter voice mail.

STEP 7: INTEREST THEM IN SETTING UP AN INTERVIEW . . .

Have your resume and any company information in front of you. Sit in a quiet room free from distractions. Once you have the hiring manager on the phone, you have about 30 seconds to make a positive impression before you are: a) referred to Human Resources, b) told there are no openings, or c) assured that they will keep your resume on file. Develop a brief summary statement which can serve as an introduction to catch their interest. For example:

“Mr. Walker, my name is Maria Jackson. I’ll be graduating from Stanford in June with a degree in International Relations and experience interning in the Marketing Department of a growing international company moving into the Latin American market. I am fluent in Spanish, and very interested in Global Enterprises, as I understand you are also developing new markets in Latin America. I am calling to find out if you received my resume, and whether you would be interested in meeting with me to discuss how I might contribute to Global Enterprises.”

STEP 8: FOLLOW UP . . .

If you get an interview: RESEARCH the organization! If you don’t, recontact later or try conducting a networking meeting with an alumnus or other contact working in the organization, for advice.***

* See CDC Guide **NETWORKING: THE MOST EFFECTIVE JOB SEARCH TECHNIQUE.**

** See CDC Guide **COVER LETTER GUIDE.**

*** See CDC Guide **INTERVIEW PREPARATION.**

ADDITIONAL READING ON JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES

(on reserve at the CDC library)

- ◆ *Researching your Way to a Good Job*, Crowther.
- ◆ *Paper Tiger: Resume Strategies that Get your Foot in the Door*, Hizer and Rosenberg.
- ◆ *From College to Career: Entry Level Resumes for Any Major*, Asher.
- ◆ *Through the Brick Wall: How to Job-Hunt in a Tight Market*, Wendleton.
- ◆ *Careering and Re-careering for the 1990’s: The Complete Guide to Planning your Future*, Krannich.