

The Hidden Job Market: How is it Opened?

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Hidden Job Market is a term that's been used for years by career experts. I believe it does exist. This post will show you what the hidden job market is and three tips for unlocking it in your [job search](#).

Hidden Job Market: What is it?

The **hidden job market** refers to jobs that aren't posted or advertised in a conventional manner. These include newspaper or online classifieds, company sites, job boards, career publications and phone-in employment lines. Statistics show that nearly 80% of jobs fall into this category. For those making \$300K and up, 90% are typically hidden.

Hidden Job Market: Why do companies use it?

Companies often choose not to advertise a position to avoid the costs, time and manpower associated with advertising, screening and interviewing. Busy hiring managers frequently dodge advertising to avoid complex recruitment processes, the charge of applicants and unproductive reviews of generic resumes. Instead, they use referrals, social networking and professional associations to find potential candidates.

Bottom line: in your **job search**, you want to [find the hidden job opportunities](#) and pull them to you, rather than push out only to visible openings.

Hidden Job Market: Some tips for opening doors

Most of my clients who have been successful in accessing the **hidden job market** in their **job search**, are using combined strategies of reaching out to their [networks and contacting people directly](#) who they don't know. They are spending no more than 20% of their time on advertised openings. Here are three approaches that have worked for them:

- **Send emails or [direct messages through LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook](#)** to your entire network asking for referrals. Try for 100+ people if you can (family, friends, former colleagues, professors, your accountant, veterinarian, etc.).

The email or message would go something like this:

Subject Line: "Can you help me?"

Body: Give your brief pitch—what you want to do and your value to an organization. List the names of 25 organizations you'd like to work for. At the bottom of the email, ask for contacts in those organizations. Make it clear that you will not be asking for a job, but rather a 10-minute

conversation about the company and how you might fit in at some point. Be sure to blind copy all recipients in email so you don't disclose their addresses.

My client, John sent an email to his network stating he was interested in a Minnesota-based IT executive role. He was pleasantly surprised when his cousin's neighbor phoned and connected him with a Minneapolis software firm's CEO. This led to an informational interview. A new CIO role was created. John got the job.

- **Maximize LinkedIn to get informational interviews.** My client Karen saw this tip online, and used it very successfully.
 - Beforehand, she had set up her LinkedIn free account (www.linkedin.com) by building a strong ROI-based profile, building her 1st degree connections, and joining LinkedIn groups relevant to her career field, interests and targets.
 - She then conducted "advanced people searches" (click "Advanced" on the right, next to the People search-box) to find people she wanted to reach out to via LinkedIn or email.

Karen wanted to work as a Financial Analyst and used those two words in her "Advanced People Search". She saw she was indirectly connected to a CFO through one LinkedIn Group and three mutual connections. She emailed the CFO directly, referencing their mutual connections. That led to a meeting, interviews and an offer.

- **Think potential opportunities with every interview or meeting.** My client, Madeline, a [40ish job seeker](#), went through an intense, long interview process with a large advertising agency's Production Department—five interviews over three months. She was notified that [she did not get the job](#). She called the hiring manager at 8:30 a.m. the next morning, and asked if there might be other areas of the firm where her expertise might be valued. This got her an interview with the Creative Department. She didn't get that one either. Undaunted, she again asked for a referral, which led to two more interviews for an unadvertised position in Media Services. This time she was offered the job, and happily accepted.

So, understanding that there is a vast **hidden job market** gives you, the job seeker an advantage over those who do not!

Applying strategies and [being persistent to reach out to decision-makers](#) who know about a job that is not visible, could put you at the very top of the candidate pool!