

Your Online Job Search

By [Susan P. Joyce](#)

The good news is that there is plenty of very good (*free!*) information and assistance available to help you find your next job. The bad news is that it will take time to sift through all of it to find what works for you. But, you can, and you will! Let's get started (below)!

First, bookmark this page (or save it as a Favorite) so that you can easily return, and continue reading. The links below will take you to tutorials, articles, and many other Web sites, so you may find yourself "lost" when you try to come back.

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Three Stages of a Job Search:

[Part 1 - Preparation](#) - the 8-steps that lay the foundation for an efficient and successful job search. Skipping this foundation step can make your job search *substantially* lengthen the time it takes you to find a job.

[Part 2 - Implementation](#) - a 5-step process to find your next job.

[Part 3 - Suspension/Maintenance](#) - after you land your new job, you can suspend your search efforts, but don't shut down completely. Stay active on LinkedIn, and keep your network alive to help you succeed in your job. It will be much easier to re-start the next time if your Profile is up-to-date, you are active on LinkedIn, and your network is still "warm."

Next, Get Comfortable with Your Computer and Being Online.

You won't spend *all* your time in front of your computer (and you really *shouldn't!*), but you need to feel comfortable. It may also increase your job

market "value" and market competitiveness.

Need help or practice? Try these:

- [The Ohio State University Library's net TUTOR](#) provides excellent information if you are just getting started, use the Internet only for email or music, or are just a little rusty. It covers everything from how search engines work to using email, social networks and e-books plus how to search and how to evaluate Websites. Great starting point!
- Doing e-mail properly is more important to you now than ever before because it's frequently how you will introduce yourself to a potential employer. Read Job-Hunt's "[Effective E-mail](#)" and "[Avoiding Spam Filters](#)" articles for tips on making e-mail work for your job search.
- To help you with other business research issues, in addition to company research, see Job-Hunt's [Guide to Company Research](#), written by genuine experts in online research.

Note: *Be sure to purchase and install anti-virus and anti-malware software* for your computer, and be sure to ***keep it up to date***. Most antivirus software comes with an update subscription that needs to be renewed annually, well worth the price!

An e-mailed resume with a computer virus attached won't be read and won't make a good impression, so keep your computer virus-free and malware-free.

You will survive this process, **and you will succeed** at finding a great new job! If you're lucky, you will also learn a lot about yourself and make a bunch of new friends in the process. Now, go for it!!

Good luck with your job search!

NEXT: Step 1 - [Preparing for Your Job Search](#)

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About the author...

[Online job search expert Susan P. Joyce](#) has been observing the online job search world and teaching online job search skills since 1995. A veteran of the United States Marine Corps and a recent Visiting Scholar at the MIT Sloan School of Management, Susan is a two-time layoff “graduate” who has worked in human resources at Harvard University and in a compensation consulting firm. Since 1998, Susan has been editor and publisher of Job-Hunt.org. Follow Susan on Twitter at [@jobhuntorg](#) and on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Google+](#).



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[This is Step 1 in Part 2 of Job-Hunt's [Online Job Search Tutorial](#).]

These tasks that will focus your job search activities for success.

Do NOT skip Part 1, [Starting Your Job Search](#)! Skipping the important tasks in Part 1 will not save you time. Rather, your job search will be longer than it needs to be because it won't have a solid foundation and direction.

Now you shift your focus to the real work of your job search.

1. Choose Your Target Employers, Research Them, and Plan

Your Approach

At the end of Part 1, you shopped for employers. Now, focus on those employers. Your employer list can have 10, 20, 50, or more employers on it. Initially, focus on the 5 or 10 who are your top choices.

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Research these employers. Visit their websites.

Learn about their products and services, their locations, their people, their plans, their finances, etc.

LinkedIn Company Profiles plus your LinkedIn Connections can be a very big help. See Job-Hunt's free [Guide to Company Research](#) for how-to information. And, of course, Google can be a big help, too (see [50 Google Searches to Avoid Layoffs and Weak Employers](#)).

This information you find will be useful for:

- Networking into the organization.
- Identifying opportunities, hopefully before others find out about them.
- Customizing your resumes and cover letters.
- Impressing interviewers with your knowledge of the organization in job interviews.
- Helping you develop good questions to ask in job interviews.
- Assisting you in determining which part of the organization would be best for you.
- Eliminating employers who turn out not to be as good as you initially thought.

Using your job search tracking system (see Step 3 of Part 2, below), and plan your job search campaign. Through your network (off-line as well as online),

find the people who work at the target employer and reach out to them. Do NOT bluntly ask if they know of any jobs open, unless you know them really well. Read Job-Hunt's free [Guide to Job Search Networking](#) and [Guide to LinkedIn for Job Search](#) for more tips, and see 7 below for more resources.

2. Shift Your Networking into High Gear

With your list of target employers, focus your networking efforts on reaching them. Use your personal network, LinkedIn, Google, Twitter, and all your other sources of connections.

Data and people tell us that networking is THE way a successful job search ends for most successful job seekers. Yes, you will hear stories and know a few people who found a job through CareerBuilder or Monster. That definitely happens, but it is estimated to happen less than 10% of the time.

Every year, the # 1 way employers fill jobs is through **employee referrals**. An employee knows someone who would be a good fit for the employer, and they hand the resume to the hiring manager or the recruiter. The new employee lands a job, and the employee who made the referral is usually rewarded with \$\$\$ by the employer. A win/win!

So start reaching out to your network and expand your network. If you belong to a professional association, look for a "career center" (or something similar) on the association's Website, or go to a few meetings to see if you can connect with other job seekers.

- Read the excellent series of articles in Job-Hunt's free [Guide to Job Search Networking](#), including the tools and tactics to help you succeed, written by experts.
- Job-Hunt's free [Guide to Social Media & Job Search](#) contains a series of articles to help you understand and leverage the emerging social

networks like [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), and [Facebook](#).

- Check the LinkedIn and Facebook Groups, too, for wonderful ways to connect and re-connect with people in your profession, industry, or past (and future!), like Job-Hunt's [Job-Hunt Help LinkedIn Group](#).

3. Increase Personal Branding, Personal SEO, and Online Reputation Management Efforts

Your best tools: [LinkedIn](#), [Google+](#), [Twitter](#)

As mentioned in Part 1, without a solid LinkedIn Profile and smart activities on LinkedIn, you are at an increasing disadvantage in the job marketplace. In 2012, a [Jobvite recruiting study](#) has shown that 92% of recruiters are using LinkedIn and other social media for recruiting. Can you afford to be invisible for all those recruiters? No, you really can't.

For ideas:

- For concrete suggestions on personal branding, read Job-Hunt's free [Guide to Personal Branding](#). Also, download the free Job-Hunt ebook, [Executive Branding and Your LinkedIn Profile](#) for more ideas, even if you're not an "executive."
- Job-Hunt's Social Media & Job Search Experts offer excellent ideas for [leveraging the social networks for your job search](#) including [LinkedIn](#) (a must!), Twitter (really!), and Facebook.
- Learn how to effectively practice personal SEO, an essential skill today. Read Job-Hunt's free [Guide to Personal SEO for Job Search and Careers](#), including [Add Misspellings to Your LinkedIn Profile](#) for ideas on how to be found if you have an uncommon name, have changed your name (via marriage or some other method), or have a name that is just often

misspelled.

4. Select a FEW Job Sites to Use

It has been estimated that there are 80,000 Web job sites. And there are thousands of other sites that have job openings - company Web sites, professional association websites, Chamber of Commerce websites, college alumni/ae websites, etc. That's more options than you could probably use in a lifetime!

How do you navigate through all of this to your new job? Pick the ones that are best for you - that have the jobs and employers you want in the locations you want.

1. [Finding the Jobs](#)

Read this article to learn about all the many places that jobs are listed, and the advantages and disadvantages of each. You'll want to check them all out to find the ones that work best for you.

2. [Choosing a Job Site](#)

Don't post your resume or leave a profile on any site until you have read this article. **Not every job site is a good, or even a *safe*, place for you to post your resume or to leave contact information!** So, learn how to spot an unsafe site before you get started.

3. [Using Web Job Sites](#)

Then, read Job-Hunt's article to see how Web job sites usually work, what services to use and what **services to avoid**.

4. [Watch Out for the Scams](#)

Take this quiz and then read the answers to see how well you can spot the job scams. On the Internet, even on otherwise trustworthy sites, you will find that bogus jobs have been posted by bogus employers. Be careful!

5. [Dirty Dozen Online Job Search Mistakes](#)

Job-Hunt's famous list of pitfalls (with some solutions, too).

5. Carefully Apply for Jobs

This is the step that ruins many opportunities - sloppy job applications and poor job interview performance based on limited preparation.

Employers are buried under with resumes and job applications for every job they post. This is why customizing your resume and cover letter for each opportunity is critical, as discussed earlier. Your focus on a limited number of employers will make the customization easier to accomplish.

For more excellent research ideas, read Job-Hunt's free [Guide to Company Research](#). Then, check the employer's website. Again! Look for news or new announcements.

6. Thoroughly Prepare for Interviews

An invitation to an interview is not a guarantee of a job offer. It's an opportunity to impress the employer and to gain sufficient information to determine if the job and employer are right for you.

Be prepared to succeed by reading the articles in Job-Hunt's [Guide to Successful Interviews](#) like:

- [How to Answer the Most Common Job Interview Questions](#)
- [The Top 4 Job Interview Success Tips](#)
- [45 Good Questions to Ask in Job Interviews](#)
- [45 Questions You Should NOT Ask in a Job Interview](#)
- [10 Deadly Job Interview Mistakes \(and How to Avoid Them\)](#)
- [How to Interview for a Temporary Job](#)

- [How to Handle Telephone Interviews](#)
- [How to Handle Lunch Interviews](#)
- [5 Tips to Ace Your Skype Job Interview](#)
- [Smart Research: Check Out the Hiring Manager](#)
- [The Winning Difference: Pre-Interview Preparation](#)

There are many more helpful articles to assist you in preparing for interviews and completing them successfully.

7. Follow Up Relentlessly and Politely (Online and Off-line)

Follow up tells the potential employer that you really are interested in working for them.

- When you have identified a job you want or a company you want to work for, customize your resume for the opportunity and send it, with a targeted cover email message, to the recruiter and hiring manager. Follow up using paper and a postage stamp.
- Don't assume that every e-mail message you send is received and read! Currently, spam (bulk unsolicited commercial e-mail) and computer virus-generated messages in circulation comprise an estimated 90% of all e-mail traffic. Companies and people have responded to this deluge of junk e-mail by using filtering software in an attempt to separate the "good" mail from the "bad." So your message and resume may be deleted or diverted by one of these electronic gate keepers. See Job-Hunt's articles on [successfully using email for job search](#).
- Following up via phone and "snail mail" is a necessity. Be politely persistent.
- Immediately send a unique thank you after an interview to each person who interviewed you . It makes a big impression since fewer than 5% of job seekers bother with this step.

- If you are rejected, further distinguish yourself from run-of-the-mill job seekers by sending a thank you for the dreaded thanks-but-no-thanks rejection letter, when you receive one from an employer you *really* liked. Sometimes the person hired doesn't work out, and the person who sent the thank you *after being rejected* gets the offer next. See Job-Hunt's article on [Turning Rejection into Opportunity](#) - it definitely works!

See Job-Hunt's [Pro-Active Job Search](#) article for more ideas.

7. Spend More Time OFF-Line than ON-Line >> Off-Line Is Where the Jobs REALLY Are!

The Internet is an awesome information source, but think of it as a "tool" in your job search toolbox. You will be hired by a person who will probably want to meet you and talk with you before offering you a job. So, use the Internet's vast information resources to help you, but don't limit your efforts to this on-line world.

Reality is that the vast majority of jobs (estimated at 75% or 80% of them!) are NOT posted on a Web site or even advertised in your local newspaper. They are never advertised at all! These jobs comprise "The Hidden Job Market."

The people hired in the Hidden Job Market jobs are known to the organization before a job opportunity has been documented or, sometimes, even recognized. They are the "friends of the friends" of the hiring manager or of another employee. Don't be discouraged! You *can* find those jobs, and the Internet can help you get started.

Your personal network is one of the best ways to find that next job (and the job after that, and *the job after that!*). Read Job-Hunt's [Guide to Job Search Networking](#) and the "[Tapping the Hidden Job Market](#)" articles for ideas and

information.

Millions of people are job hunting right now. We have some recommendations for how you can [Stand Out From the Crowd](#). And, you've probably heard this message hundreds of times, because it's true, back to the first task on this page - *networking is the most effective way to find a job*.

NEXT: Step 2 - [Finding Jobs Online](#)

About the author...

[Online job search expert Susan P. Joyce](#) has been observing the online job search world and teaching online job search skills since 1995. A veteran of the United States Marine Corps and a recent Visiting Scholar at the MIT Sloan School of Management, Susan is a two-time layoff “graduate” who has worked in human resources at Harvard University and in a compensation consulting firm. Since 1998, Susan has been editor and publisher of Job-Hunt.org. Follow Susan on Twitter at [@jobhuntorg](#) and on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Google+](#).