

## Test: are you accessing the hidden job market?

**Every week we hear about employers turning away hundreds, if not thousands of applicants for each role they have. Registering on job boards and applying to well publicised adverts is fine, but it has never been more important to be able to access the hidden job market.**

It makes sense to step back and double check your job hunting activity. This may require tackling uncomfortable truths but will lead you to understand how to access the elusive hidden job market.

### Check 1

First and foremost, don't follow the herd. Only applying for advertised positions is a safe way of prolonging the agony, as will chasing jobs in declining industries. **Look for organisations that are swimming against the tide, or niche sectors that are doing well.**

### Check 2

**Get out there.** Meet recruitment consultants, go to events and seminars, meet friends and ex-colleagues ALL face to face – it's no good just sending your CV. A job search conducted sitting at a screen will always be low energy. Jobsites will occupy your time, but unless you have a technical specialism, are unlikely to get results more than 5% of the time. Success in the hidden job market comes when someone remembers you when you're not in the room so make an impression by meeting people in person.

### Check 3

Once you **get the attention of a recruitment consultant** they offer an invaluable service: put you forward for jobs, tell you about unadvertised vacancies, advise you on your CV and interviews. And guess what – it's all for free. How to get the attention of a good, relevant recruitment consultant? Do your research, make your approach targeted, call direct and follow up with your details on email. Most of all, meet face to face and work hard to impress. Too many job-seekers fail at this hurdle due to a sloppy approach.

### Check 4

Make **direct approaches to employers**. If you want a job in marketing, call up the marketing manager or director. You'll be surprised how few people bother to do this and if you're looking to stand out, what easier way? You'll look pro-active, confident and keen. Whatever technique you use, make sure you are targeted. The cardinal sin of a generic CV / covering letter will not suffice.

### Check 5

Whether talking to a recruitment consultant, employer, ex-colleague or friend **make sure you can describe what you want to do and what you have to offer**. You need to **be targeted and specific** – an open to all options approach is unlikely to work. If you're not sure why, consider this humorous example from The Royle

Family.....<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4BWd9KNtTYc>

Score your activity against each check point above. If you are delivering on at least 3 of the above, then I've every belief you are making enough luck for yourself so that you'll get your break soon.