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SP461D Finding Work - Job Openings - Where To Find Them

The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE
SP 461-D

Finding Work

Job Openings: Where To Find Them

Do you know where to look for jobs? If you are only looking at the "Help Wanted" ads in the newspaper, you are missing out on numerous potential jobs. Check a number of sources to find out about possible job openings.

Sources of Job Openings:

1. Tennessee Employment Security Commission (Job Service)

- More job listings in a variety of occupational categories than any other source.
- Know about area job openings.
- Offices are conveniently located throughout the state.
- Assists with placement after you register for employment.
- Consultants are available to answer questions, provide aptitude testing and offer career counseling.
- Charges no fees for use of services.

2. School Guidance, Vocational, Technical or College Placement Centers

- Valuable source for professional and skilled openings.
- May be available only to students and alumni of the school.
- Some schools have bulletins that list job openings.

3. "Help Wanted" Ads

- May familiarize you with some job opportunities that you didn't know existed.
- Descriptions of jobs may lack detailed information about required qualifications.
- The least effective job search source.

4. Acquaintances, Business Associates, Friends and Relatives

- They may know of openings where they work or at the firms of their friends.
- They can alert others to watch for potential job openings.
- "Networking" improves your chance of finding a job. Your acquaintances will be job searching for you with the best intentions.

5. Telephone Directory

- Look in the yellow pages for names of firms that employ workers in your areas of skills.

6. Chamber of Commerce Office

- Can provide a list of firms that employ workers in your area of interest.

7. Private Employment Agencies

- Specialize in a few occupations.
- Charge applicants a fee for registration and placement.
- Check the reliability of agency and fees before registering.

8. State Trade Associations

- Check about upcoming meetings in the field of your choice. Jobs are also oftentimes advertised at regional or state meetings.

Advertise Your Skills

- Run an ad in the newspaper listing your skills and where you might be reached.
- Emphasize your qualities, such as well organized, creative, supervisory experience or public relations.
- Make your ad specific, but not so specific that it discourages a range of opportunities.

Visit Firms

- Do not stay at home and wait for someone to call you.
- The more contacts you make, the more quickly you will get a job.

Be Observant and Resourceful

- Read the newspapers and listen to news broadcasts on TV and radio for start-up of new firms and company expansions.

- Go to the local library and browse through state publications for job information.

Be Persistent and Dedicated

- Treat job-hunting as a job. The search is a 40-hour-a-week commitment.
- Contact several potential employers each day.
- Obtain the name of the supervisor of the department you want to work in and call him/her directly. Inquire about potential job openings.
- Direct your attention to positions that will become available, not just those that are available.
- Follow up leads immediately. If you learn of a job opening late in the day, call the firm to arrange an appointment for the next day.

Reading the Help-Wanted Ads

Newspaper classified ads are a common source of job leads. There are several advantages to using help-wanted ads. You can read them at your leisure, select desirable jobs and make application without going through a third party. Ads may contain a good cross-section of job vacancies in the area.

On the other hand, want ads are sometimes inadequate, imprecise and misleading. Some ads are not really job openings, but rather an attempt to check out the local labor supply. Of course, you have no way of knowing the purpose of a want ad.

Being able to spot different types of want ads can make your job search more productive. Most ads will fall into one of the following categories:

Agency ads are placed by private employment agencies to advertise positions and the agencies' services. Generally you must sign a contract agreeing to pay a fee before you are referred to any job openings.

ENTERPRISE
Professional Service

Available Professional Positions

Claims Clerk $1,100
Accounting Clerk $1,200
Receptionist $1,000
Phone 678-1000

Blind ads do not identify the employer. You are usually instructed to send a resume to a newspaper address and wait for the employer to contact you. The prospects of getting a job through a blind ad are poor.

WELDER
40 hours per week, company benefits.
Minimum of 1 year experience preferred.
Write Box W, Greeneville News, Greeneville, SC

"No experience needed" ads often mean the job is hard to fill because of low wages or poor working conditions.

Accommodation ads are the best to pursue. These ads provide the name and address of the employer and a description of the job and qualifications. They usually indicate the employer is willing to arrange an interview. This type of ad is a sure indication that an opening exists.

LARGE EQUIPMENT MECHANIC
For established dealership and service center in upstate.
Must be experienced in large equipment maintenance,
be willing to work full-time.
Call Gary Jones at (803) 600-1000.
Equal Opportunity Employer

Ads that tell about jobs may be very short. Abbreviations are often used to save space. The following list of help wanted ad abbreviations will assist you in reading and understanding the ads.

Abbreviations Often Used in Newspaper Ads

appl.=applicant
appt.=appointment
asst.=assistant
cert.=certified/certificate
comm.=commission (pay based on sales)
const.=construction
dept.=department
dir=director
E.O.E.=Equal Opportunity Employer
eves.=evenings
exc.=excellent
exp.=experience
ext.=telephone extension number
FT=full time
grad.=graduate
immed.=immediate
incl.=included
lic.=licensed
mfg.=manufacturing
mgr.=manager
min.=minimum
nec.=necessary
ofc.=office
oppor. or oppty.=opportunity
pd.=paid
pos.=position
pref.=preferred
PT=part time
qual.=qualified or qualifications
ref.=reference
req.=required
sal.=salary
sec.=secretary
temp.=temporary
trnee.=trainee
w/=with
wk.=week
wpm.=words per minute
yrs.=years

Following up a Job Opening

Once you have identified a potential job opening, you have the option of three contact approaches. You may respond by sending a letter of application and a resume. Or you may take a copy of your resume and go directly to the prospective employer's place of business to seek an interview. Also, you may decide to place a telephone call to the place of business to request an interview.

Responding to the first two approaches is easy if you have carefully written your resume and letter of application and have perfected the interviewing procedure. The third approach, the telephone contact, requires a different kind of preparation. Without the benefit of anything concrete other than your voice, you have to convince the firm to ask you in for an interview. It is critical that you be prepared. The following tips may assist you as you plan a telephone interview request.

Before the Call

- Have information about the available job handy.
- Have paper and pencil ready.
- Make a list of the information you need to learn during the call.
- Select a telephone in a quiet place, preferably a private phone.

The Call

- Give your name and reason for calling.
- Ask to speak to a specific person or department or for the personnel department.
- Mention where you first heard of the job you are interested in discussing.
- Give short, clear answers to questions.
- Be positive about yourself.
- Give important, but minimal, information about yourself (do not talk too much).
- If salary is mentioned, ask about salary range rather than a specific amount.
- Ask appropriate questions.
- Be persistent, but polite.

Setting Up The Interview

- Record the name of the interviewer.
- Note the date and time as well as location.
- If needed, request travel directions.
- Review specifics with speaker to be sure you have everything recorded correctly.
- Thank the speaker for his/her time and express interest in upcoming interview.

Employment Agencies

Employment agencies are public and private. Public employment agencies are run by the government and do not charge a fee. Look in your telephone directory (in the blue pages) under the name of Department of Employment Security for the number and address of the nearest office.

Private employment agencies are in the business to help you locate a job or to secure a pool of applicants for employers. They will charge a fee for their services. You or the employers must sign an agreement before they will assist in the job search. If you agree to pay the fee and the agency locates a job which you accept, you must give them a percentage of your first few paychecks for finding the job. Generally, fees are about one month's salary on a new job. Some private agencies will also do vocational assessments and prepare resumes. These agencies do not make job placements.

Many private agencies specialize in particular types of employment,such as temporary clerical jobs, health professions, management positions or technical jobs. Before you get involved with any organization, make sure you

understand its function and the agreement form.

Executive Search Firms are retained by an employer for a fee to locate candidates for executive positions. They are paid whether or not the employer hires their candidates. “Head hunters,” as they are known, will be of little use to you unless you’re already an executive. However, head hunter firms will take any resume for their required fee.

Temporary Services actually hire workers and assign them to short-term or part-time work in client firms. These firms can place a person quickly. However, a worker will not receive the fringe benefits (sick days, medical insurance, paid vacations) one normally receives on a regular, full-time job. This may be a way to enter the work force, because it enables you to get your foot in the door, which could lead to full-time employment.

Career Counselors give the job seeker advice on how to conduct a job search and scout the job market for a fee between $500 and several thousand dollars. Many also provide aptitude and interest testing, as well as personal counseling. These agencies do not make job placements and you will have to pay the fee whether you find a job or not.

The agency should explain the amount of the fee and when it is due in the agreement form. Make sure you fully understand your legal responsibilities before deciding to use a private employment agency.

Once you start your job search, you will find that looking for work can become discouraging at times; but sustained effort usually pays off. Be resourceful and dedicated during your job hunt. The more people you let know about your interest in locating a job, the more leads you will get, therefore increasing your chance of finding employment.

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Billy G. Hicks, Dean