

## *The Hidden Job Market*

Did you know it is estimated that up to 80% of the jobs filled each year are never advertised? That's a big number! This means that the job postings you read online, in the newspaper, and on company job boards, only represent 20% of the jobs available. The remaining number – these unposted jobs – are what is known as the “hidden job market.” Typically, these unseen job opportunities are filled (or created) by in-house employee recommendations, professional or friendly referrals, or by an employer's direct contact with a candidate. You, as a job candidate, have to tap into this hidden market and connect with potential employers.

Ok, so how do you do that? One way is through research. By researching companies or industries, you will be able to identify the signs of a potential job opening. You should read newspapers (local and national), trade journals (regional, national, and industry/function specific), Chamber of Commerce announcements and newsletters, and company websites to spot emerging opportunities. Look for companies who are expanding their facilities or products and services, experiencing growth, or starting new projects. Also look for announcements regarding employee promotions. These are the types of activities that lead to job opportunities that may not be advertised yet. Your goal is to connect with the employer before the position is advertised and he/she is bombarded with job applications.

Another way of tapping into the hidden job market is networking. The hidden job market puts a lot of truth into that old phrase, “It's not what you know, but who you know.” This does not mean even though you do not know the first thing about accounting, you can still get an accounting job in a firm just because you know a senior partner. You still have to know your field -so go to class and study hard! However, knowing the right person can give you the inside track

on possible job opportunities or help to push you above other job candidates.

You should start building relationships with college recruiters, managers and department heads. College recruiters have already expressed a direct interest in recruiting Southern Miss students. Moreover, they know which positions will be opening over the next year in the various branches or locations of their company. Department heads and managers typically

know of positions that may be opening up in their divisions long before the company personnel department has been notified of the opening. Your want to have them immediately think of you when they realize they will soon have to fill a position. Or even, to recommend you to one of their colleagues in another organization.



Informational interviews are an outstanding way to start building a networking contact with a department head or manager. If you contacted a department manager and immediately started talking about your interest in a job (that may or may not exist yet), chances are that you will be quickly forwarded to the company's personnel department or website. However, if you contact that person seeking his/her advice and insights into that career field, you will have better luck in building a networking relationship. (For more information on conducting informational interviews, visit Career Services in JGH room 207)

To sum up, if you are only applying for jobs that are posted on job boards, you are missing out on so many more opportunities. You need to start digging deeper and working your contacts to locate jobs and jump ahead of your competition

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## Networking Tips

Networking is a vital part of the successful job search and it takes practice. You do not want to be fumbling through your first networking attempt when you are talking to the manager at your ideal company. Instead, practice with friends and contacts at lesser companies.

Start building your network by creating a list of your warm contacts. Warm contacts are family, friends, professors, or contacts gained by referrals. Cold contacts are obtained by making phone calls or visits to people who do not know you. Traditionally, warm contacts are more successful than cold contacts.

Identify people or groups that lend themselves to networking opportunities. Professional or social student organizations and clubs provide an excellent chance to network. Events sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce are designed to be ideal for networking. Networking opportunities also jump up in your daily activities. Talk to the people around you in the bank, the grocery store, at church, and when you get a haircut. (Just think of all the connections and discussions to be had in a barber or beauty shop!)

Here are some other tips for networking in your job search:

- **Start Early** – building a list of strong relationships and contacts takes time. The sooner you start, the stronger your network.
- **Prepare An Opening Statement** – show the benefit of your knowledge and skills to the other person. Be specific and mention your goals and any companies/industries of interest.
- **Never Let Them Leave Empty Handed** – always have resumes or personal/business cards available to give them. Always get their business card or contact information.
- **Track All Contacts** – keep good records of where/when you met the person, what opportunities you discussed, when you sent a letter, etc...

- **Learn To Handle Rejection** – many times you will have to chip away at a wall of rejection before you have success with a particular contact. Remember to be positive and friendly at all times.
- **Ask For Two More Contacts** – ask each of your contacts for the names of two more people who might be interested in your background (or who would know someone who would be interested). This will help your list of networking contacts to grow quickly.
- **Be Someone Else's Contact** – people appreciate and return the favor when you assist them.
- **Follow Up** – do not let a contact forget about you. Keep your contacts informed of any changes in your status. Send follow up or thank you notes restating key points.

## Critical Dates To Remember

### On Campus Interviews McLemore Hall 112

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|------|--|
| 3/24 | Isle of Capri - Internship                         |
| 3/25 | New Orleans Marriott                               |
| 3/25 | Enterprise Rent-A-Car                              |
| 3/30 | Moore Wallace                                      |
| 4/6  | MS State Tax Commission<br>(Sign-up Deadline: 4/2) |

**Disney Info Session** McLemore Hall 112  
(Only For Those Who Received Job Offers)  
Thurs, 3/25 and Mon, 3/29 12:00 both days

**Wall Street Journal Accounts** - If you have paid your USM/Journal program fee, don't forget to activate your account! Your username and password has been sent to your USM email account. Questions? Contact – marie.johnson@dowjones.com

**CBED CAREER SERVICES**  
Located in Joseph Green Hall Room 207  
Stop by or call for an appointment today!

**266-5931**