

Canvassing Potential Employers

Sometimes job openings and opportunities can be found by **canvassing** or **cold calling** specific employers as to whether a position exists or not. Even if a job opening is not advertised or does not exist at that time, the employer could create a position or consider you for the first one that becomes available.

Develop Your Cold Call List

Develop a list of employers you want to contact. Do not waste time on employers who do not need the skills and abilities you have to offer. Be selective in deciding which employers you will approach.

Start your list with:

- Your past employers
- Employers who offer on-the-job training if you do not have a lot of experience
- Companies that are building and expanding, and may need workers
- Employers that people in your network have recommended

Tips For Contacting Employers

- You can identify potential employers by utilizing resources such as the Yellow Pages, business, industrial, and service directories, or the Chamber of Commerce.
- Try to see the employer in person. Research indicates that 80% of employment is a result of direct contacts.
- Always try to find out who is responsible for hiring and get in touch with that person.
- If seeing the employer in-person is impossible, then send a cover letter and your résumé. Use the telephone, e-mail or fax to follow-up.
- Be prepared to answer any questions the employer might ask.
- Make sure you record all information an employer provides you with. This helps to organize your job search and makes follow-up easier.

Cold Calling

Telephone Cold Calling

The following telephone cold calling scripts are only a guide. You will need to change the wording to fit your communication style.

It helps to have a written script in front of you when making phone calls to potential employers:

Hello (Good Morning/Afternoon), my name is _____.

I'm doing some employment research on _____ (field of work) positions in the area, and was wondering if you could tell me who is responsible for the hiring in your company.

If you are not speaking with the person who would do the hiring then ask for the following:

- *Who am I speaking with?*
- *What is the hiring person's job title and correct spelling of their name.*
- *How is it best to reach _____.*
- *Thank you, _____ (person's name). You've been a great help and I appreciate your time. Goodbye.*

Now you have contact name(s) to address in a cover letter or a follow-up phone call.

Questions To Ask

When you reach the person in charge of hiring, then ask for the following information:

Hello _____ (name of person with Mr./Mrs./Ms.). My name is _____ (your name). I was speaking with _____ (contact from your initial call) who told me you might be able to help me with my research of positions in the area. Would you have a few minutes to meet with me to discuss the information I have gathered about _____ (field of work you are trying to attain).

If the person who hires doesn't want to do this over the phone, or says they don't have time, try to arrange a telephone or in-person meeting at a more convenient time.

The information you want to talk about with the person are notes you have made about job descriptions for positions in the field, and your résumé. Ask this person for their opinion as to whether your information accurately reflects jobs available in the field, and your résumé indicates you are qualified for this type of work.

If you have received positive feedback, then ask if they have any current or near future positions available. If no, then ask if you may leave your resume for consideration should their staffing needs change.