

# ***JOB SEEKING SKILLS***

**Step 1:  
Get prepared**



**3: Where to find job opportunities**

# Where to find job opportunities



You may be able to find a job through someone you already know or by making new contacts.

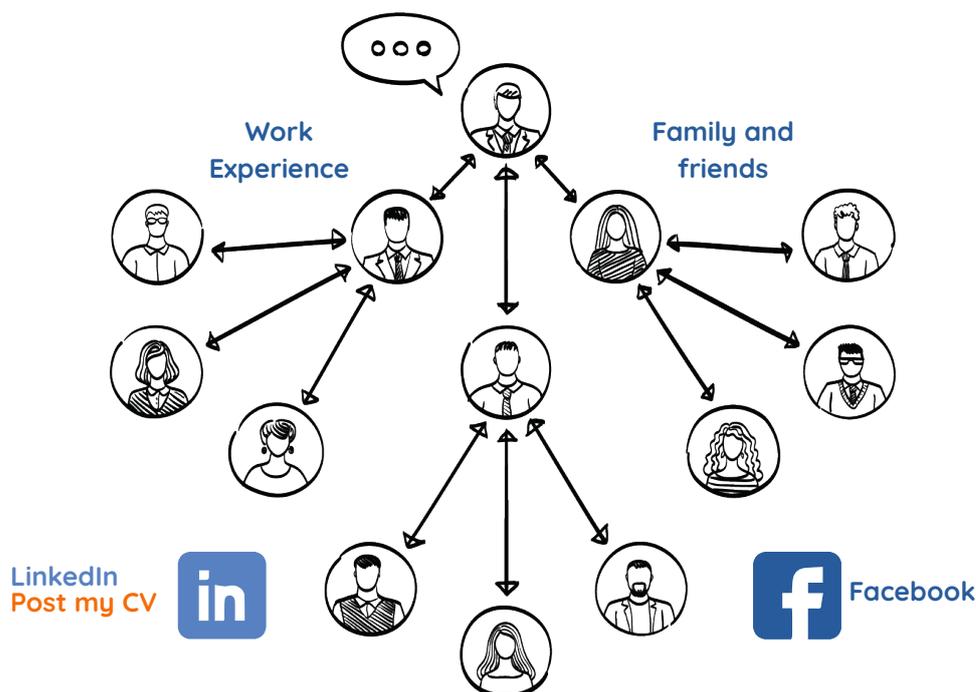
This can be a great way to find 'hidden' jobs that employers haven't advertised. And, by meeting and speaking with new people, called networking in business terms, you build up new contacts to use in future.

Another method to try is contacting employers directly, on the off chance that they have a vacancy, which is called speculative job searching.

Read on for more information!

## Word of mouth or personal contacts

- ✓ A great way to find the 'hidden' jobs.
- ✓ Almost 1/3rd of employers find new employees this way.
- ✓ This traditional and cost-effective method is used by around half of all small businesses.



# Make sure your contacts know that you're looking for work, and what type of work you'd be interested in.



Think Facebook, or whatever other social media sites you use, as long as you're careful about who can access your profile and what they can see.



This is the sort of thing social media networks were created for, making and using contacts.



There are more details on this in [5: Social media platforms](#).

Many employers let their existing staff know about planned recruitment campaigns through employee newsletters, notice boards or company intranet sites.

Some companies even have official 'employee referral' schemes, where employees can recommend someone they know.

**Maybe one of those employees knows you!**



## Activity 1: My job search network

Think of all the people you may know and complete the [Activity 1 worksheet](#) to create a job search network that you can use.

## Making useful work-related contacts

### Careers exhibitions, job fairs and recruitment events

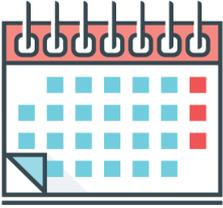
Attending these types of events is a great way to:

- meet and talk with people who can give you the sort of information and advice you won't find on websites
- speak directly to people who recruit, select and interview people for jobs and apprenticeships
- explore the different learning and career pathways open to you
- get ahead of the competition – job, course or apprenticeship applicants who don't make the effort to go along
- find out about careers and jobs.



#### To Do List

- ✓ Details of event
- ✓ List of exhibitors
- ✓ Do some research
- ✓ Goals
- ✓ Workshops
- ✓ Prepare questions
- ✓ Be smart but comfortable
- ✓ Notepad and pen



**Scottish Careers Week** and **Scottish Apprenticeship Week** are held every year.

During the week many colleges, training providers, employers and even some Jobcentres hold events. These are great for getting information about emerging sectors, career pathways and opportunities available, including details about recruitment and any entry tests.

Events will usually be advertised in colleges, libraries and on social media.

### Check out these websites as a starting point:



- [www.apprenticeships.scot/scottish-apprenticeship-week](http://www.apprenticeships.scot/scottish-apprenticeship-week)
- [www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk](http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk)
- [www.planitplus.net](http://www.planitplus.net)
- [www.ukcareersfair.com](http://www.ukcareersfair.com)
- [nationalapprenticeshipevents.co.uk](http://nationalapprenticeshipevents.co.uk)

Try to make the most of any exhibition or event you go to by speaking to people – apprentices, employers, trainers and tutors, as they may be helpful to you in the future.

### Before you go:

- find out as much as you can about the event – the location, date and time
- find out which organisations and businesses will be there and what they do - sometimes this information is available online, but sometimes you need to follow the event on social media for updates (sometimes an event may be held by just one employer, such as NHS Scotland or the Army)
- ask yourself what you want to get out of the event, such as information on a specific career or employers who plan to recruit
- prioritise what you want to do and who you want to speak with – you may not have the time to do everything you want
- if the information is available, check the times and locations of any activities you want to take part in
- write down the questions you want to ask
- plan what to wear - something smart, presentable and comfortable
- take a notepad and pen – you won't remember everything you find out.



## After the event:

- read the information you've collected
- put any important dates, for example application dates, or contacts in your calendar
- reflect on what you found out and what it might mean for your future plans
- get online and find out more
- follow up on any contacts you've made
- act on what you found out - apply, research, update your career or learning plans.



## Activity 2: Preparing for a careers or job fair

Use one of the websites mentioned or do an internet search to find a suitable careers or job event.

Complete the [Activity 2 worksheet](#) as though you will be attending that event so that you can practise for the real thing.



**Also, remember that your best networking tool can be your CV.**

More about this in [6: Writing your CV](#).

## Contacting potential employers directly

Contacting local companies and organisations speculatively (on the off-chance that they might be taking on new workers, including Modern Apprentices) can be worthwhile.

This is particularly true if you know what type of work you are looking for and can target specific employers and training providers.





## You're more likely to be successful if you plan and organise your job search activities.

The following advice may help.

1. **Think about your goal** – the type of work you want and the organisations you'd like to work for.
2. **Gather information** about these companies and organisations. It's extremely important that you find out as much as you can about them.
3. **Visit their websites** (note that some of the big employers, such as Scottish Power or Marks and Spencer, are less likely to accept speculative applications and usually advertise vacancies on their own websites).
4. **Identify and note down the employers you plan to contact** – sort them into smaller groups, according to how highly you rate them.
5. **Contact them** – either in the way they suggest on their website or, for smaller employers, by phone and/or by sending them your (well prepared and tailored) CV and covering letter (more about this in [6: Writing your CV](#) and [8: Writing a cover letter](#)).
6. **If you send your CV but have still not heard from them** after a couple of weeks, try emailing or phoning them to check they got it.
7. **Keep an up to date record** of the employers you've contacted and the outcome.
8. **Reflect on the results of your hard work.** Which ways of contacting employers worked best for you? Focus on what gets good results.



### Many employers don't acknowledge that they have received your CV.

It is very frustrating, but try not to take it too much to heart. The important thing is not to give up – adapt your plan and try again!

## Are you looking for a Modern Apprenticeship?



It is still worth contacting employers on the off chance that they are looking for someone, there is more information on where to find Modern Apprenticeships in [4: Recruitment and organisation websites](#).

## Recruitment agencies

**Finding staff through recruitment agencies is a popular method of recruitment in the private sector.**

Some agencies recruit for a wide range of employers, others specialise in recruiting for particular industries, such as catering. They can be useful for finding temporary or seasonal work as well as full time jobs.

You don't have to pay to use a recruitment agency (the employer does). You shouldn't feel obliged to apply for jobs that simply aren't suitable.



You can find local agencies by using a recruitment agency directory, such as Agency Central at [www.agencycentral.co.uk](http://www.agencycentral.co.uk)

The Recruitment and Employment Federation website lists their members at [www.rec.uk.com/membership/member-directory](http://www.rec.uk.com/membership/member-directory)

To register, just phone or email them. They'll usually invite you in for an interview and ask you to bring your CV along.

**TIP: If you register with an agency, you should keep in touch regularly so that they keep you in mind for jobs that come up.**

Now you know more about where to find job opportunities, you can move on to

[4: Recruitment and organisation websites](#)

Or [click here](#) to return to the main screen.