

How People Find Jobs

The communications industry has some unique characteristics that affect the job search:

- The industry hires on an “as needed” basis, usually filling positions in a short time frame. This means that they DO NOT usually recruit months in advance or hire large numbers of people or trainees at a time. Communications companies anticipate openings but hire only when they know for certain that there are openings.
 - Outside experience is usually required. One of the most important facts for communications employers is hands-on or professional experience. “Real world” experience in the field will set you apart from other graduates.
 - People hire people they know. As stated above, companies try to fill positions quickly and often hire through “word of mouth.” The more people who know who you are and what you’re looking for, the greater your chances of finding work in your field.
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Follow three steps for a proactive, organized and successful job search:

1. **TARGET** skills, interests and environmental factors you’d like to use or have on the job; target places that need those skills and/or offer those factors. Also, target geographically. Attempt to build a target list of 20–30 specific companies.
2. **RESEARCH** those organizations through trade magazines, industry professionals, the Internet and other resources.
3. **NETWORK** with people who do what you want to do in the companies and industries that interest you. If you network, you will hear of job leads **BEFORE** they’re advertised. The back of this booklet contains the names of Rowan alumni who have agreed to serve as networking contacts.

Step 1: TARGET

Target your job search by thinking about the following skill areas:

1. **PEOPLE.** All jobs require contact with people. How do you like to interact with people? Do you like to teach, inform, educate, help, motivate, persuade, direct, interview or work on a team?
2. **ORGANIZATION.** All jobs require organization of some type. Some people are better at it than others. What do you like to organize (if anything)? Things? People? Ideas? Events? Schedules? Information?
3. **WRITING.** All jobs require some form of writing. It may or may not be a main focus of a job. What do you like to write? Informational pieces? Opinion? News? Persuasive? Correspondence?
4. **RESEARCH.** All jobs in the public relations field require research. Do you want to actively participate in your organization's research activities? Do you want to conduct surveys or focus groups? Do you prefer Internet research? Would you rather work for an organization that outsources its research?
5. **TECHNOLOGY.** Do you like to work with equipment like lighting, editing, cameras or audio? Do you enjoy using computers for layout and design projects like posters, newsletters and Web sites? Do you use computers simply for getting a job done — for word processing and e-mail?
6. **CREATIVITY.** In what ways do you like to be creative? Visually? With words? In problem solving? In events planning or marketing?

You can target your job search additionally by identifying/clarifying the following:

7. **ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS** How do you feel about deadlines? What type of deadlines do you work best with — daily, weekly or your own? Do you prefer a corporate or a casual atmosphere? Do you prefer a structured office with clearly defined roles or a looser set-up where everyone pitches in? Do you prefer to know what each day will bring or do you prefer interruptions and constant change? Do you like to travel? Do you like to get out of the office frequently, or do you prefer going to the same place daily?
8. **OTHER FACTORS** Do you have any additional interests or skills that would further narrow down your list of possibilities? For example, an interest in the music or entertainment industry? Sports? A cause or belief you believe strongly in like women's issues, health-care, animals or the environment? Do you have a language or cultural knowledge you wish to use?

Step 2: Research

Know the basics...

Collect secondary information about target companies using:

- The Internet
- Trade magazines
- Reading or watching their product

Know and organize the following:

- Address and Phone Numbers including headquarters and other office locations
- Departments — How the company is arranged or set up
- Names of Individuals in areas of interest
- Their Clients
- Current Projects

Research will help you formulate questions to ask networking contacts. These contacts will serve as your “in” to companies and organizations.



Step 3: Network

Networking is simply connecting with people who do the kind of work you want to do. It is, by far, the most successful job strategy there is.

Four groups of personal and career networks:

- Personal relationships — family, friends, acquaintances
- Professional relationships — internship colleagues and/or job supervisors
- Organizational/Community affiliations — professional organizations, volunteer work, etc.
- Opportunistic networks — the person you meet on the bus, in line at the airport, etc.

Networking Steps

1. Gather contacts from/by:
 - past jobs and coworkers
 - business sections of newspapers
 - trade magazines
 - professional organizations
 - family, friends and professors
 - industry directories
 - the alumni list in the back of this publication
2. Set specific networking goals
 - Why are you contacting this person?
 - What type of information can this person give you?
3. Write specific goals and questions down on paper
4. Determine your method of contact
 - letter
 - e-mail
 - phone
 - face-to-face

BE PATIENT! Contacts have fulltime jobs. You should continually try to reach them — be pleasantly persistent!

5. Make your contact
 - specify as to how he/she can help you
 - keep your conversation short and professional
 - ask permission to keep in touch if necessary
 - send a thank-you letter
6. Follow up and stay in touch. Stay on top of your contacts' minds with a quick e-mail or voice message that updates your status. Call contacts with a question or request for information or the name of another contact.

Networking Yields Job Leads

Networking will lead to verbal job leads and other contacts in your desired industry. If you talk to enough people, you will begin to hear of leads or someone will ask you to send your résumé. It is your responsibility, however, to stay on top of your contacts' minds by keeping in touch with them.