

A Job Hunter's Guide to Contacting Companies You Want to Work For

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Searching for a job often means looking for who is hiring. You contact others in your network and browse through employment listings. However, you could also turn the process around and start looking at where you want to work regardless of any current vacancy.

Exploring these kinds of passive openings has advantages for you and your potential employer because you're targeting opportunities where you would excel. Find out how to identify organizations where you want to work, and how to communicate with them, using these strategies.

Learning About Your Preferred Companies

- 1. Browse online.** Gather information from the company website and LinkedIn. Introduce yourself on social media and strike up conversations. **Check out Glass Door to find out what current and former employees have to say.**
- 2. Read the news.** Local press and industry publications can also be revealing. Maybe your potential employer sponsors community programs or lost half its sales revenue.
- 3. Seek referrals. Ask around to see if you have contacts who know employees at the companies you're researching.** Personal introductions make it much easier to set up initial meetings.
- 4. Attend events.** Networking sessions and business conferences are an efficient way to access lots of information and individual perspectives. Check calendar

listings for upcoming events.

5. Volunteer your services. Do you want an inside look at the kind of work you're contemplating? Maybe you can intern or volunteer at the organization or a similar operation.

6. Identify decision makers. Find out who you need to talk with. Calling the CEO directly could be the best route for senior positions. Otherwise, you'll probably start out with hiring managers and department heads.

Reaching Out to Your Preferred Companies

1. Consider your contribution. Put the focus on what you can do for the company instead of talking about what you want. Talk about how you can add value and help them reach their goals. Be as specific as possible and hold off on sending your resume for now.

2. Hone your pitch. You'll need to capture their attention quickly once you make contact. Rehearse your pitch until you can deliver it in about 15 to 20 seconds.

3. Send an email. Your first communication will usually be an email. Craft a subject line that will pique their interest. Say you want to talk about their marketing campaign or their accounting needs.

4. Ask to meet. Follow up with a request for a brief meeting. It's often easier to reach people if you call early in the morning or late in the day in the middle of the week. Be sure to leave no more than one or two voice mails so they won't feel harassed.

5. **Build your qualifications.** If you succeed at arranging a meeting, listen closely. **Find out what would make you a more attractive candidate and work on those skills.** Brush up on your high school Spanish or strengthen your social media presence.

6. **Stay in touch.** Remember that you're making progress even if your preferred company is unable to hire you immediately. Check in occasionally to let them know you're still interested.

7. **Be patient.** Landing your dream job can take time. **If one prospect fails to respond, move on to other options.** Cultivate a strong support network that will encourage you and give you constructive feedback. Believe in yourself and think positively about your future.

Finding a position you love will enhance your quality of life, and probably make your new employer glad you joined them. Make contacting companies you want to work for a central strategy in your job hunting.