

# CHAPTER 1

## What It Takes to Get a Good Job in Less Time— And Why Traditional Job Search Methods Don't Work Very Well

### **Quick Overview**

In this chapter, I review the following:

- ✓ Traditional job search techniques
- ✓ Why nontraditional methods are more effective
- ✓ Two things that can cut your job search time in half
- ✓ Why some people take longer to find jobs
- ✓ The hidden job market is where most of the jobs are
- ✓ How people really find jobs
- ✓ Why many employers don't like to advertise
- ✓ Why resumes don't get jobs, interviews do
- ✓ How to search for civil service jobs
- ✓ How to make better use of human resource departments, application forms, newspaper help wanted ads, employment Web sites, employer's online classified advertisements, and resumes
- ✓ How to take advantage of government employment services, private employment agencies, school programs, and other resources
- ✓ How to manage the stress of being unemployed or under-employed

*"If you use better job search methods, you can get a better job in much less time!"*

It's true. I have spent many years looking into which job search methods work better than others. It is clear that some techniques can reduce the time it takes to find a job. This fact has been demonstrated many times in well-run job search programs, as well as in research that I and many others have conducted.

You can cut your job search time in half or more—and this book will teach you the basic principles of how to do it.

If you are currently looking for a job, the job search “how to” aspects of this book will probably appeal to you the most. But another element of this book may be far more important to you over time: I have included a variety of tools and advice to help you understand yourself and what you want. This self-knowledge is an essential element in helping you define just what sort of job you want.

If you don't know what you want you are not likely to find it. I help you refine your goals and give you the tools you need to reach them.

If you know what your ideal job would be, you are more likely to find one that comes close to it. This may be far more important to you in the long run than just finding any job quickly.

## Why Some People Take Longer to Find Jobs and How You Can Avoid This

Looking for a job is a learned skill. If you are lucky, you may find one quickly. But finding even entry-level jobs can take a long time to find if you don't know how to look.

Quick  
Fact

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the average adult spends three to five months finding a new job. It can take even longer when unemployment rates are high, if you earn more than average, or have skills that are not in demand in your area.

But some people find jobs faster than others with similar credentials, even in times of high unemployment. Why do they get quicker results? While the answers can be complex, there are only two primary reasons why some people get jobs faster than others.

### ***Doing Just Two Things Can Cut Your Job Search Time in Half***

Quick  
Fact

The average job seeker spends fewer than 15 hours a week looking for a job and gets fewer than two interviews.

#### **What It Takes to Get a Good Job in Less Time**

1. Job seekers who spend more time actually looking for work find jobs faster than those spending less time.
2. Job seekers who get more interviews find jobs faster because the more interviews you get, the more likely you are to get a job offer.

The bottom line is that people who spend more time on their job search and who get more interviews will usually get jobs faster.

## ***There Are Two Major Problems with Traditional Job Search Methods***

Part of the problem with the traditional approach to the job search is that it leads to many dead ends and rapid discouragement.

Quick  
Alert



Traditional techniques encourage you to be passive in your job search. They don't work well for most people, and often result in you being out of work or underemployed longer than necessary.

Another major problem with the traditional job search is that job seekers define an interview too narrowly. By doing this, they overlook many opportunities and make obtaining an interview harder than it needs to be.

### **Two Problems with Traditional Approaches**

1. Traditional techniques encourage you to be passive in your job search.
2. Traditional techniques encourage you to define an interview too narrowly.

This book, particularly the next chapter, tackles both of these problems. Of the variety of job search methods, some clearly work better than others. The most effective ones help you remain active in your job search and do not encourage you to wait until someone calls you. Using more effective techniques can dramatically increase the number of interviews you get. But more effective methods will only work, of course, if you use them.

## ***Most Job Openings Will Never Be Advertised***

Most jobs are not advertised, and people who use traditional job search methods never find out about these jobs. A variety of research studies find that most job openings are not visible to job seekers using traditional job search methods.

For example, job openings posted on the Internet and in newspaper want ads are considered public knowledge—anyone can find out about them. But these advertised openings add up to only about 25 percent of all job openings. The other 75 percent or so are hidden from you if you use traditional job search methods. Your job search should be a search for these hidden jobs.