# Job Search Strategies

The job search process involves many strategies. Consider using a combination of strategies to maximize results. Take advantage of SDSU Career Services’ free resources to support a successful job search. To help you select a productive approach review the following strategies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Published Ads</strong></td>
<td>• Follow stated application guidelines • Customize your application materials • Submit quality materials • Use listings as reference material to apply for future/related openings</td>
<td>• Direct access to job listings and requirements • Targeting an open position • An opportunity to individualize resume and cover letter to specific requirements</td>
<td>• Highly competitive due to large number of applicants • May require substantial number of applications to get responses • Small percentage of jobs are advertised • Low placement rate</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Internet</strong></td>
<td>• Ensure that postings are current • Review websites constantly • Adhere to submission guidelines • Customize your resume • Use links to research related jobs and organizations • Verify website reputation before sharing information</td>
<td>• Economical and time efficient • Easy access to many jobs/organizations • An opportunity to research related jobs and customize approach to meet criteria • Ability to search in distant locations</td>
<td>• Millions of applicants have “easy” access • Some postings are not updated frequently • Many companies don’t post online • May be difficult to check status • Concerns about information confidentiality</td>
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<td><strong>SDSU On-Campus</strong></td>
<td>• Attend employer information sessions • Have your resume reviewed by a career counselor • Upload your resume(s) to Aztec Career Connection • Login frequently to learn about new listings and schedule on-campus interviews • Research the employer database to prepare for potential interviews</td>
<td>• No-cost/efficient way to contact employers • Many companies hire exclusively college graduates for specific jobs • Less competition/higher success rate than traditional methods • Ability to research employers in depth through SDSU Career Services’ free resources</td>
<td>• Not all industries recruit on campus • Recruiting is active during academic calendar and slows down in summer • Jobs may be available after graduation</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SDSU Career Fairs</strong></td>
<td>• Research employers in advance and create a list to target your top choices at the fair • View recent fair additions at <a href="http://career.sdsu.edu">http://career.sdsu.edu</a> • Attend a “Networking a Career Fair” workshop and pick up a flyer in Career Services • Dress professionally and bring resumes • Ask questions to learn more about your field • Obtain business cards and stay in contact</td>
<td>• Access to many employers in a brief period of time and a single location • Very personal approach to learn about companies, careers and requirements • Opportunity to network with recruiters • Many positions target students and recent graduates and may not require experience</td>
<td>• Many disciplines may not be represented • Small companies and non-profit sector representation may be limited • Hiring may not be immediate</td>
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## Job Search Strategies (continued)

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| **Staffing Agencies**       | • Research agencies to find about the services offered and their reputation  
• Locate agencies that specialize in your field  
• Be cautious if you are required to pay a fee  
• Highlight relevant experience and transferable skills | • Service is normally free to job seekers  
• Agencies conduct pre-screening before referral  
• A temporary assignment may be the only way to obtain a permanent job with some firms  
• An opportunity to survey employers and acquire experience through job assignments | • Assignments can be short-term  
• The variety of jobs can be limited  
• It can be difficult to obtain positions for recent graduates with limited experience  
• May start at a lower salary than comparable permanent positions  
• Agencies’ primary commitment is with the paying recruiting firm, not the job seeker |
| **Unsolicited Mail/Email**  | • Research companies to learn about specific needs  
• Customize your prospecting letter to address each company uniquely  
• Obtain the name of the hiring manager and address this person  
• Follow up by phone whenever possible | • Ability to target employers in a specific field  
• May access unadvertised positions  
• Employer may be impressed with a well tailored mailing | • Time consuming  
• Requires significant research and high-degree of individualization  
• Response rates are low |
| **Direct Contact (Cold Calls/Visits)** | • Use business/phone directories to locate employers  
• Learn about company before calling/visiting  
• Develop meaningful questions to ask  
• Have a resume/cover letter ready  
• Schedule an informational interview  
• Ask about future openings/contacts in absence of jobs  
• Stay in touch once you have established a contact | • Personal contact with hiring authority  
• Resume/Application can be submitted directly to hiring manager  
• May become aware about unadvertised current and future vacancies  
• Access to jobs that are never posted  
• An opportunity to obtain new contacts | • Takes time to research companies and contact information  
• It is difficult to access hiring managers  
• Requires being assertive and willing to take risks  
• Success rate is low (1 in 20 average) |
| **Networking**              | • Inform people that you are searching for a job  
• Provide details about the desired job  
• Ask contacts if they know someone who can help  
• Update and distribute your resume  
• Contact new leads and expand network  
• Stay in touch with all contacts  
• Join professional organizations/clubs  
• Attend events/conferences and network  
• Volunteer for boards and organizations | • Effective way to find jobs  
• May learn tips about company and hiring trends from “inside” sources  
• Ability to access the “hidden” job market and find jobs that will not be advertised  
• Less competition than traditional search  
• May be referred to a company that only hires through employee/contact referrals  
• An opportunity to expand network | • Requires significant time and effort  
• Willingness to talk to any potential contact  
• May require talking to numerous contacts before obtaining results  
• Requires tenacity to follow up  
• Contacts need to be maintained over time |