


# How To Find Jobs



McGill

# CaPS

## Guides

Career Planning Service   
Service de planification de carrière



# HOW TO FIND JOBS

## INTRODUCTION

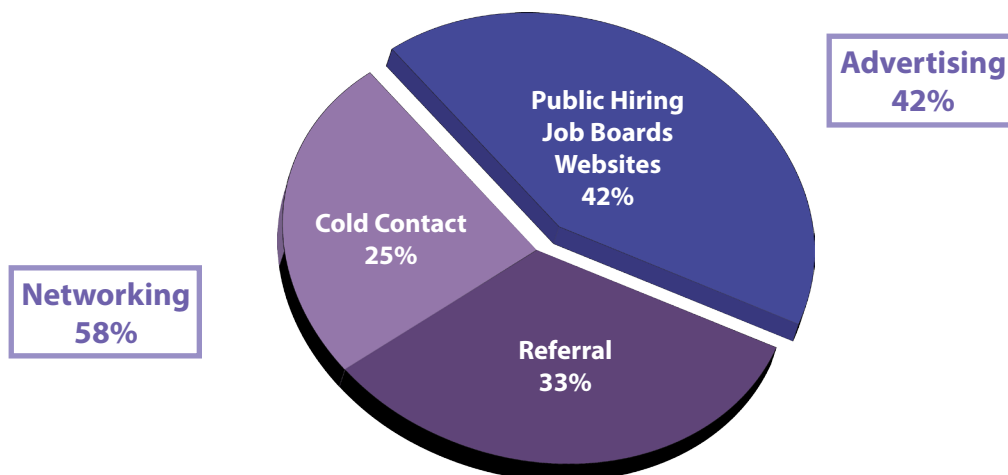
### How do you go about looking for a job?

If you are like most job seekers, you start by browsing online jobs listings. You search for titles or companies which interest you in your city, review the requirements and qualifications, send off your CV and Cover Letter and...voilà, you have a job! Easy, right?

Except... this is rarely how things work in reality, and many students report the experience of looking for work online to be overwhelming, depressing and frustrating.

In fact, surveys regularly show that **the majority of available jobs are never publicly advertised**. The exact percentage is extremely industry-dependent, but regardless of the type of job you are looking for, if responding to online postings is your only job search strategy, you are likely to be looking for a long time.

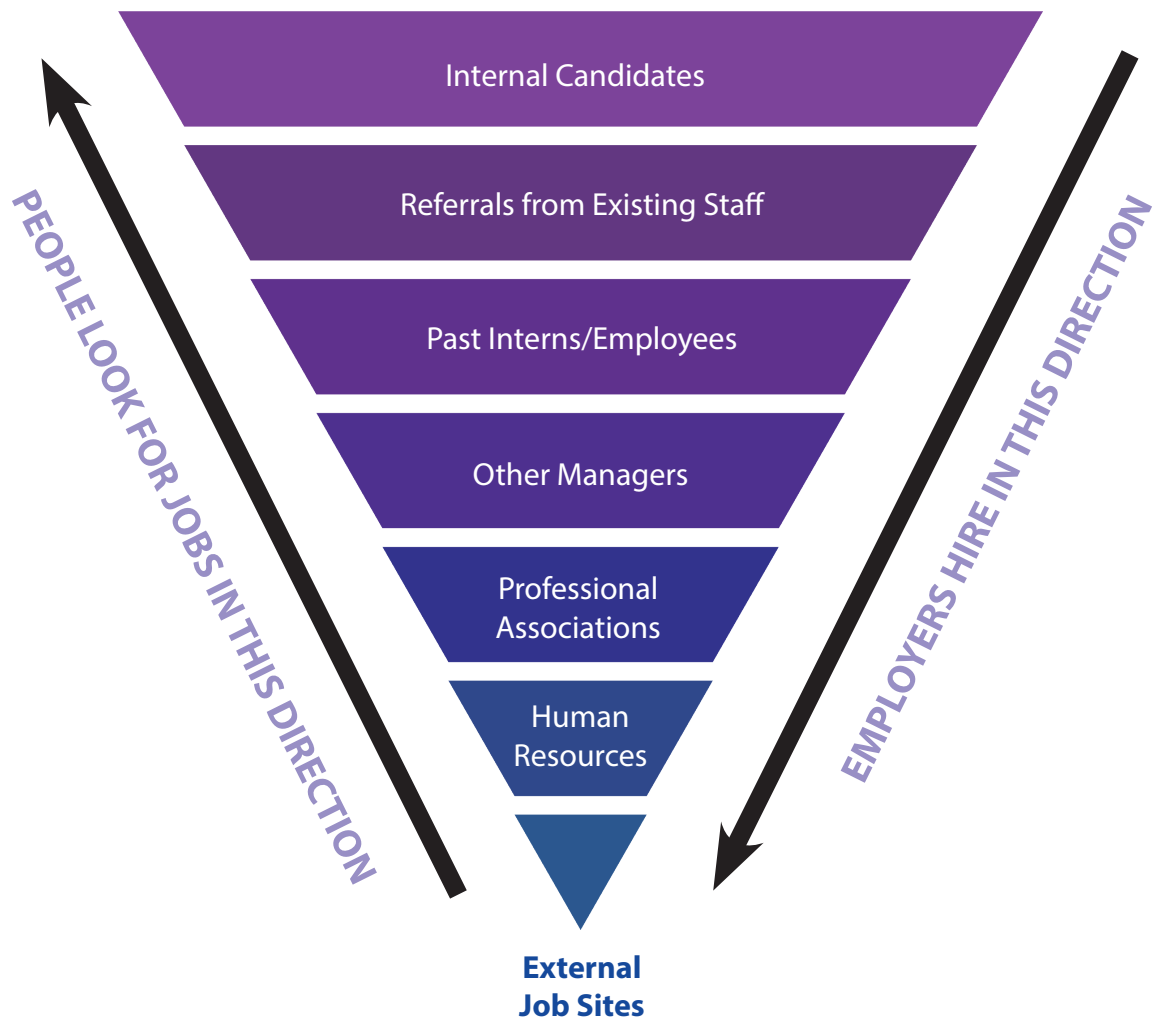
Our most recent CaPS Destination Survey results showed that successful job seekers found opportunities in the following ways:



### How do employers find and connect with potential employees?

Most employers publicly advertise jobs on an as-needed basis only, when other, more informal methods of hiring have failed to pay off. Along with the appropriate skills and experience, employers are ideally looking for people they can trust. Any recommendation or connection to a new hire generally increases the likelihood that he or she will be trustworthy.

The triangle on the next page depicts the way that most employers prefer to search for new hires starting at the top and moving downward. In general, as you get closer to the tip of the triangle, trust decreases and the time and resources required for the search increases.



**Internal Candidates:** Already known and trusted.

**Referrals from Existing Staff:** Likely know the position well and will suggest those that they themselves would want to work with and who would be a good fit.

**Past Interns/Employees:** Might be looking for work and are already known to be a good fit.

**Other Managers:** Trusted by hiring managers and are likely to know of suitable candidates.

**Professional Associations:** Good for finding “pools” of people with a particular skillset.

**Human Resources:** Will post the position and/or go through CVs that they have on file.

**External Job Sites:** The last, most costly and labour-intensive option.

## 6 TIPS FOR AN EFFECTIVE JOB SEARCH

### 1) Be active, not passive

Jobs rarely come to you, you need to seek them out. A potential employer has no idea you would love to work for them unless you initiate contact. In general, the more active and direct your approach to job searching, the better!

### 2) Look for jobs AND for employers

A quarter of all job seekers obtain positions by “cold” contacting employers. This involves researching organizations and companies of interest and then making contact with them, regardless of whether or not you have been referred. Many employers do accept and subsequently review CVs from prospective applicants who have proactively sought out the organization and can demonstrate a high degree of “fit” in terms of their skills and background.

- Once you have narrowed down the field(s) and geographic area(s) you are interested in, ask at CaPS for help in locating directories of companies and organizations in your sector
- Research prospective employers to determine if they are a good fit, and to ensure your application materials are tailored to their needs
- Actively apply to any employers you are interested in, even if they are not publicly advertising openings

### 3) Make effective use of online resources AND job search in person

- When feasible, make your enquiries and drop off your applications in person. Your chances of having a conversation with someone and finding out more about the organization are much higher!
- Maintain an updated profile on professional networking sites such as LinkedIn
- Create “Search Agents” through [myFuture](#), the CaPS online job postings database, to be emailed automatically when a job of interest is posted
- Use the CaPS Resource Centre and website to find additional relevant online resources

### 4) Take concrete and ongoing steps to expand your network

- Make a list of Primary Contacts: people you already know such as friends, family, neighbours, professors, teammates and community acquaintances
- Ask for referrals to anyone working in your target field/company
- Follow up with these secondary contacts, and when possible, arrange information interviews (see ‘How To Contact Employers’ guide for more advice on this)
- Actively create new contacts:
  - Sign up for the McGill Mentor Program if you are a current student
  - Join a professional association, attend career-related conferences and events
  - Volunteer or do an internship in your area of interest

### 5) Ask for advice, ideas and information

Most people are not in a position to “give” you a job. What people can (and often love to) give is ideas, advice and information!

- Initiate conversations about your job search
- Find out if your contacts or anyone they know are working in your area; if so, invite them out for coffee to find out more about what they do
- Ask about hiring practices in this area, job search tips and other contacts in the field they would recommend you talk to
- Seek out help in finding information that would assist you in your search

### 6) Follow up on your applications/enquiries

Many job seekers neglect this crucial step. They send one exploratory email or drop off a CV and then... that's it. As long as you are polite and professional, sending a follow up email or making a second phone call is more than just ok, it's often necessary.

- Maintain contact with the people you have met. Send an email to thank them, share a resource, ask a follow up question, or update them on your situation. If you keep the relationship going, they are likely to let you know when a job comes up
- Follow up on any applications you have submitted online or in person: pick up the phone, call the company or department or contact person and let them know that you are very interested in working for them and are following up on your application
- In general, follow up works better the more direct the method. An email is easy to ignore/miss. A phone call less so. A human being standing in front of you, fairly difficult!
- Be professional, courteous and clear
- Thank people for their time and assistance

### 7) Bonus tip

Make an appointment at CaPS to discuss your job search in more detail. We look forward to meeting you!

# PRIMARY CONTACT LIST

## People I know personally:

Family \_\_\_\_\_

Friends \_\_\_\_\_

Neighbours \_\_\_\_\_

## People I know from school:

Professors/Teachers \_\_\_\_\_

Classmates \_\_\_\_\_

Mentors/Alumni \_\_\_\_\_

McGill Staff/Advisors \_\_\_\_\_

## People I know from work:

Co-workers \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisors \_\_\_\_\_

Clients \_\_\_\_\_

Professional Associations \_\_\_\_\_

## People I know from:

Volunteering \_\_\_\_\_

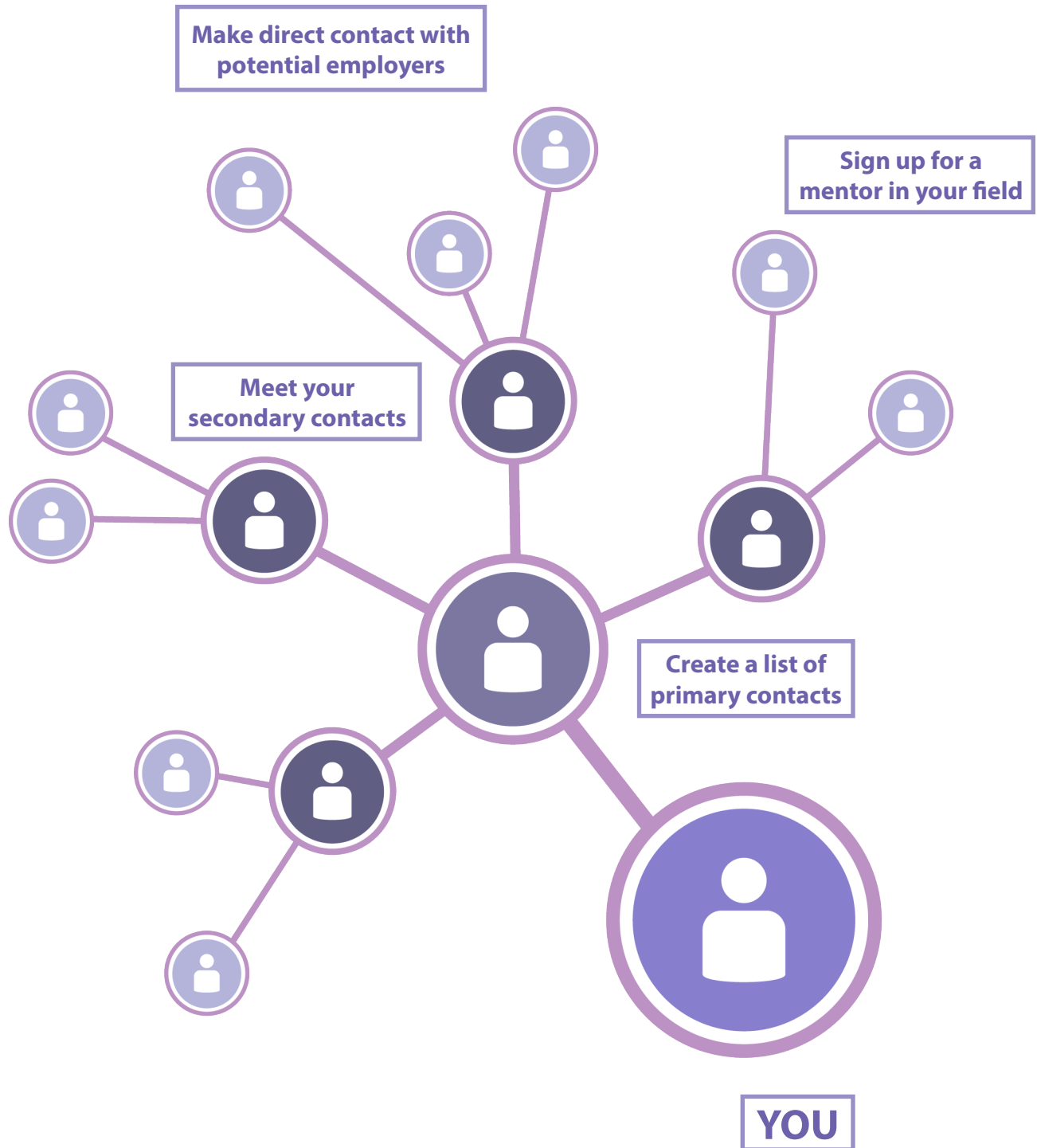
Extracurriculars & Clubs \_\_\_\_\_

Sports \_\_\_\_\_

Church/Temple \_\_\_\_\_

Community Involvement \_\_\_\_\_

# EXPANDING YOUR NETWORK





# CaPS

HELPING STUDENTS PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

## **CaPS Website**

For services, information and resources to guide you through your next steps.

[www.mcgill.ca/caps](http://www.mcgill.ca/caps)

## **myFuture**

For jobs, internships, workshops, events and .

[caps.myfuture.mcgill.ca](http://caps.myfuture.mcgill.ca)

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### **McGill Career Planning Service (Downtown)**

William & Mary Brown Student Services Building  
3600 McTavish, Suite 2200  
Montreal, QC H3A 0G3  
514-398-3304

### **McGill Career Planning Service (Macdonald)**

Centennial Centre  
21,111 Lakeshore Road  
Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, QC H9x 3V9  
5143987582