



Cold calling

INTRODUCTION

Many jobs that arise in New Zealand are never advertised. To access these 'hidden' jobs, you'll want to make use of the vast range of [networking](#) resources that are now available to you. By building a network of contacts you may be able to secure introductions to people who can help with your job search – increasingly this is done through [social media](#).

Additionally, cold calling is one of the methods that can be used. For it to be effective however, accurate targeting is crucial. The amount of time you spend researching the organisation, and who to target within it, will be much greater than the amount of time you spend making the contact.

Start by compiling a list of organisations within which you'd like to work. By making a direct approach to them you can cover a lot of potential employers in a short time. Note though, that some organisations make it clear that they do not want cold-calling approaches. Where this is the case they will often say so on their website – hence the need to do your [research](#).

This research will be into the organisation and you'll be looking initially for the name of the person you need to contact. This should preferably be the manager or the person in charge of recruitment or human resources. On-line tools such as [LinkedIn](#)'s 'Advanced Search' can help you to find the name and title of the best person to contact before you make your approach.

- Be prepared with the questions you need to ask and practise before hand
- Consider why your contacts might want to talk to you
- What can you offer them?
- What skills, knowledge and experience do you have that might be useful to your contacts?
- Why should your contacts meet face-to-face with you?

Don't be put off if there are no vacancies. Offer to email your CV for their files and make contact regularly to discuss possible new opportunities. Where they offer the option of registering on-line, your interest in working for them, take up this option. Done properly, cold calling creates an image of an enterprising candidate who takes the initiative and perceives opportunities.

INTRODUCING YOURSELF

It is important to be able to quickly identify who you are and what you can offer. Develop a brief introduction which summarises your qualifications, knowledge, experience, skills, personality, passion etc. and practise it until it sounds natural and fluent. Remember that the people you are contacting are busy so this 'introduction' should be no longer than two minutes. Indeed, getting to the point quickly means it's more likely that you won't lose your contact's attention!



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For example:

“My name is I have recently graduated from Massey University with a in and I am now surveying the area of with a view to finding employment. I have particular skills in and am particularly interested in I have had experience in through I am keen to find a position which will allow me to use my skills and experience and would like to discuss this with you further.”

Be prepared for the fact that you may not reach your contact on the first attempt. However, if you put the work into preparing you have a better chance of ultimately doing so and you need to be ready.

CREATING YOUR OWN JOB

It may be that in your research you find an employer who could use your skills even though they haven't realised this yet. This is the process of “creating your own job.” You need to research the organisation, markets, outputs etc. and being able to illustrate succinctly how your skills and attributes will complement what they do. In this case concentrate on the needs of the organisation, adopt a positive tone and establish your communication as a serious dialogue between equals.

JOBS FOR PEOPLE

Some organisations are open to finding jobs for people, rather than finding people for jobs. If the right person comes along the employer will find a position for them. The more you network the more you have the chance of being the right person.

SENDING AN UNSOLICITED CV

- Be selective in the organisations that you target
- Do your homework so that you know about the organisation
- Target your CV to the requirements of the organisation
- Always include a cover letter
- Address your application package to a particular person
- Follow up with a 'phone call within two days
- Ask for advice and maintain regular contact to discuss any new opportunities.

When emailing a contact, make sure that the subject line that you use is sufficiently specific. Use a sentence or phrase that's likely to make the recipient open the email. Where you have contacts in common, you may want to note these in your subject line. For example, “We're both connected to ... and....”.

In all of your cold calling approaches, stress your accomplishments (and where possible quantify these!) and ensure that they're easy to find. Explain how they could translate into the role, sector and organisation that you're targeting. Potential employers are keen to see that you can do the job, that you want to and that you'll fit in. Given this, focus on what you can do for them. Are you showing them that you want to, and can, help them to achieve their goals?



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FOLLOW-UP

This is your responsibility. If your contact says that they may be available next month you could ask for the best way for you to contact them again to arrange a time. For example, could you email them in a couple of weeks then follow up with a telephone call if you don't hear from them?

When you prepare for cold calls and take control of the situation, you'll feel better about your job search and have more opportunities to succeed with your networking.

KEEP GOING

Always look out for more opportunities to meet people in your preferred sector. For example, can you identify and attend relevant conferences, exhibitions, seminars and expos? Could you arrange to work shadow contacts in roles that interest you?

Keep reviewing what you are learning:

- Do the sectors and roles that appeal still interest you?
- Do they still match your expectations?
- What short courses might you undertake or skills might you develop that could increase your chances?

Your contacts will be interested in your progress, remember to drop them a line with news of your progress and current thinking.